A

CHRONICLE

OF THE

CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

FROM THE MSS. OF FRAY ANTONIO AGAPIDA.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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A

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CHAPTER XLVI.

How King Ferdinand laid siege to Velez Malaga.

HITHERTO the events of this renowned war have been little else than a succession of brilliant but brief exploits, such as sudden forays and wild skirmishes among the mountains, or the surprisals of castles, fortresses, and frontier towns. We approach now to more important and prolonged operations, in which ancient and mighty cities, the bulwarks of Granada, were invested by powerful armies, subdued by slow and regular sieges, and thus the capital left naked and alone.

The glorious triumphs of the catholic sove-

reigns, says Fray Antonio Agapida, had resounded throughout the East, and filled all heathenesse with alarm. The Grand Turk, Bajazet II., and his deadly foe the Grand Soldan of Egypt, suspending for a time their bloody feuds, entered into a league to protect the religion of Mahomet and the kingdom of Granada from the hostilities of the Christians. It was concerted between them, that Bajazet should send a powerful armada against the island of Sicily, then appertaining to the Spanish crown, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the Castilian sovereigns, while, at the same time, great bodies of troops should be poured into Granada from the opposite coast of Africa.

Ferdinand and Isabella received timely intelligence of these designs. They resolved at once to carry the war into the seabord of Granada, to possess themselves of its ports, and thus, as it were, to bar the gates of the kingdom against all external aid. Malaga was to be the main object of attack: it was the principal seaport of the kingdom, and almost necessary to its existence. It had long been the seat of opulent commerce, sending many

ships to the coasts of Syria and Egypt. It was also the great channel of communication with Africa, through which were introduced supplies of money, troops, arms, and steeds, from Tunis, Tripoli, Fez, Tremezan, and other Barbary powers. It was emphatically called, therefore, the Hand and Mouth of Granada.

Before laying siege to this redoubtable city, however, it was deemed necessary to secure the neighbouring city of Velez Malaga, and its dependent places, which might otherwise harass the besieging army.

For this important campaign, the nobles of the kingdom were again summoned to take the field with their forces, in the spring of 1487. The menaced invasion of the infidel powers of the East had awakened new ardour in the bosoms of all true Christian knights, and so zealously did they respond to the summons of the sovereigns, that an army of twenty thousand cavalry, and fifty thousand foot, the flower of Spanish warriors, led by the bravest of Spanish cavaliers, thronged the renowned city of Cordova at the appointed time.

On the night before this mighty host set forth upon its march, an earthquake shook

the city. The inhabitants, awakened by the shaking of the walls and rocking of the towers, fled to the courts and squares, fearing to be overwhelmed by the ruins of their dwellings. The earthquake was most violent in the quarter of the royal residence, the site of the ancient palace of the Moorish kings. Many looked upon this as an omen of some impending evil, but Fray Antonio Agapida, in that infallible spirit of divination which succeeds an event, plainly reads in it a presage, that the empire of the Moors was about to be shaken to its centre.

It was on Saturday, the eve of the Sunday of Palms, says a worthy and loyal chronicler of the times, that the most catholic monarch departed with his army to render service to heaven, and make war upon the Moors*. Heavy rains had swelled all the streams, and rendered the roads deep and difficult. The king therefore divided his host into two bodies. In one he put all the artillery, guarded by a strong body of horse, and commanded by the master of Alcantara, and Martin Alonzo,

* Pulgar, Cronica de los Reyes Catholicos.

senior of Montemayor. This division was to proceed by the road through the valleys, where pasturage abounded for the oxen which drew the ordnance.

The main body of the army was led by the king in person. It was divided into numerous battalions, each commanded by some distinguished cavalier. The king took the rough and perilous road of the mountains; and few mountains are more rugged and difficult than those of Andalusia. The roads are mere mule-paths, straggling amidst rocks and along the verge of precipices, clambering vast craggy heights, or descending into frightful chasms and ravines, with scanty and uncertain foothold for either man or steed. Four thousand pioneers were sent in advance, under the alcayde de los Donzeles, to conquer, in some degree, the asperities of the road. Some had pickaxes and crows, to break the rocks; some implements to construct bridges over the mountain torrents; while it was the duty of others to lay steppingstones in the smaller streams. As the country was inhabited by fierce Moorish mountaineers, Don Diego de Castrillo was despatched, with a body of horse

and foot, to take possession of the heights and passes. Notwithstanding every precaution, the royal army suffered excessively on its march. At one time, there was no place to encamp for five leagues of the most toilsome and mountainous country, and many of the beasts of burden sank down and perished on the road.

It was with the greatest joy, therefore, that the royal army emerged from these stern and frightful defiles, and came to where they looked down upon the vega of Velez Malaga. The region before them was one of the most delectable to the eye that ever was ravaged by an army. Sheltered from every rude blast by a screen of mountains, and sloping and expanding to the south, this lovely valley was quickened by the most generous sunshine, watered by the silver meanderings of the Velez, and refreshed by cooling breezes from the Mediterranean. The sloping hills were covered with vineyards and olive trees, the distant fields waved with grain, or were verdant with pasturage, while around the city were delightful gardens, the favourite retreats of the Moors, where their white pavilions gleamed among groves of oranges, citrons,

and pomegranates, and were surmounted by stately palms, those plants of southern growth, bespeaking a generous climate and a cloudless sky.

In the upper part of this delightful valley the city of Velez Malaga reared its warrior battlements, in stern contrast to the landscape. It was built on the declivity of a steep and insulated hill, and strongly fortified by walls and towers. The crest of the hill rose high above the town into a mere crag, inaccessible on every other side, and crowned by a powerful castle, which domineered over the surrounding country. Two suburbs swept down into the valley, from the skirts of the town, and were defended by bulwarks and deep ditches. The vast ranges of gray mountains, often capped with clouds, which rose to the North, were inhabited by a hardy and warlike race, whose strong fortresses of Comares, Camillas, Competa, and Benemarhorga frowned down from cragged heights.

At the time that the Christian host arrived in sight of this valley, a squadron was hovering on the smooth sea before it, displaying the banner of Castile. This was commanded by

the Count of Trevento, and consisted of four armed galleys, convoying a number of caravels, laden with supplies for the army.

After surveying the ground, King Ferdinand encamped on the side of a mountain, which advanced close to the city, and was the last of a rugged sierra, or chain of heights, that extended quite to Granada. On the summit of this mountain, and overlooking the camp, was a Moorish town, powerfully fortified, called Bentomiz, and which, from its vicinity, had been considered capable of yielding great assistance to Velez Malaga. Several of the generals remonstrated with the king for choosing a post so exposed to assaults from the mountaineers. Ferdinand replied, that he should thus cut off all communication between the town and the city; and that, as to the danger, his soldiers must keep the more vigilant guard against surprise.

King Ferdinand rode forth, attended by several cavaliers, and a small number of cuirassiers, appointing the various stations of the camp. While a body of foot soldiers were taking possession, as an advanced guard, of an important height which overlooked the city,

the king retired to a tent to take refreshment. While at table, he was startled by a sudden uproar, and, looking forth, beheld his soldiers flying before a superior force of the enemy. The king had on no other armour but a cuirass. Seizing a lance, however, he sprang upon his horse, and galloped to protect the fugitives, followed by his handful of knights and cuirassiers. When the Spaniards saw the king hastening to their aid, they turned upon their pursuers. Ferdinand, in his eagerness, threw himself into the midst of the foe. One of his grooms was killed beside him; but before the Moor who slew him could escape, the king transfixed him with his lance. He then sought to draw his sword, which hung at his saddle-bow, but in vain. Never had he been exposed to such peril: he was surrounded by the enemy, without a weapon wherewith to defend himself.

In this moment of awful jeopardy, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Count de Cabra, the Adelantado of Murcia, with two other cavaliers, named Garcilasso de la Vega and Diego de Atayde, came galloping to the scene of action, and, surrounding the king, made a loyal ram-

part of their bodies against the assaults of the Moors. The horse of the marquis was pierced by an arrow, and that worthy cavalier exposed to imminent danger; but, with the aid of his valorous companions, he quickly put the enemy to flight, and pursued them with slaughter to the very gates of the city.

When these loyal warriors returned from the pursuit, they remonstrated with the king for exposing his life in personal conflict, seeing that he had so many valiant captains, whose business it was to fight. They reminded him, that the life of a prince was the life of his people, and that many a brave army was lost by the loss of its commander. They entreated him, therefore, in future to protect them with the force of his mind in the cabinet, rather than of his arm in the field.

Ferdinand acknowledged the wisdom of their advice, but declared, that he could not see his people in peril without venturing his person to assist them: a reply, say the old chroniclers, which delighted the whole army, inasmuch as they saw, that he not only governed them as a good king, but protected them as a valiant captain. Ferdinand, however, was conscious

of the extreme peril to which he had been exposed, and made a vow never again to venture into battle without having his sword girt to his side*.

When this achievement of the king was related to Isabella, she trembled amidst her joy at his safety; and afterwards, in memorial of the event, she granted to Velez Malaga, as the arms of the city, the figure of the king on horseback, with a groom lying dead at his feet, and the Moors flying†.

The camp was formed, but the artillery was yet on the road, advancing with infinite labour at the rate of merely a league a day; for heavy rains had converted the streams of the valleys into raging torrents, and completely broken up the roads. In the meantime King Ferdinand ordered an assault on the suburbs of the city. They were carried, after a sanguinary conflict of six hours, in which many Christian cavaliers were killed and wounded, and among the latter Don Alvaro of Portugal, son of the Duke of Braganza. The suburbs were then fortified

* Illescas, Hist. Pontif. lib. vi. c. 20. Vedmar, Hist. Velez Malaga.

† Idem.

towards the city with trenches and palisades, and garrisoned by a chosen force under Don Fadrique de Toledo. Other trenches were digged round the city, and from the suburbs to the royal camp, so as to cut off all communication with the surrounding country.

Bodies of troops were also sent to take possession of the mountain passes, by which the supplies for the army had to be brought. The mountains, however, were so steep and rugged, and so full of defiles and lurking places, that the Moors could sally forth and retreat in perfect security, frequently sweeping down upon Christian convoys, and bearing off both booty and prisoners to their strong holds. Sometimes the Moors would light fires at night on the sides of the mountains, which would be answered by fires from the watchtowers and fortresses. By these signals they would concert assaults upon the Christian camp, which, in consequence, was obliged to be continually on the alert, and ready to fly to arms.

King Ferdinand flattered himself, that the manifestation of his force had struck sufficient terror into the city, and that, by offers of clemency, it might be induced to capitulate. He

wrote a letter, therefore, to the commanders, promising, in case of immediate surrender, that all the inhabitants should be permitted to depart with their effects; but threatening them with fire and sword if they persisted in defence. This letter was despatched by a cavalier named Carvajal, who, putting it on the end of a lance, gave it to the Moors who were on the walls of the city. The commanders replied, that the king was too noble and magnanimous to put such a threat in execution, and that they should not surrender, as they knew the artillery could not be brought to the camp, and they were promised succour by the king of Granada.

At the same time that he received this reply, the king learned, that at the strong town of Comares, upon a height about two leagues distant from the camp, a large number of warriors had assembled from the Axarquia, the same mountains in which the Christian cavaliers had been massacred in the beginning of the war; and that others were daily expected, for this rugged sierra was capable of furnishng fifteen thousand fighting men.

King Ferdinand felt that his army, thus

disjointed and enclosed in an enemy's country, was in a perilous situation, and that the utmost discipline and vigilance were necessary. He put the camp under the strictest regulations, forbidding all gaming, blasphemy, or brawl, and expelling all loose women, and their attendant bully-ruffians, the usual fomenters of riot and contention among soldiery. He ordered, that none should sally forth to skirmish without permission from their commanders; that none should set fire to the woods on the neighbouring mountains, and that all word of security given to Moorish places or individuals should be inviolably observed. These regulations were enforced by severe penalties, and had such salutary effect, that, though a vast host of various people was collected together, not an opprobrious epithet was heard, nor a weapon drawn in quarrel.

In the mean time the cloud of war went on gathering about the summits of the mountains: multitudes of the fierce warriors of the sierra descended to the lower heights of Bentomiz, which overhung the camp, intending to force their way into the city. A detachment was sent against them, which, after sharp fighting,

drove them to the higher cliffs of the mountain, where it was impossible to pursue them.

Ten days had elapsed since the encampment of the army, yet still the artillery had not arrived. The lombards and other heavy ordnance were left, in despair, at Antequera; the rest came groaning slowly through the narrow valleys, which were filled with long trains of artillery and cars laden with munitions. At length part of the smaller ordnance arrived within half a league of the camp, and the Christians were animated with the hopes of soon being able to make a regular attack upon the fortifications of the city.

CHAPTER XLVII

How King Ferdinand and his army were exposed to imminent peril before Velez Malaga.

WHILE the standard of the cross waved on the hills before Velez Malaga, and every height and cliff bristled with hostile arms, the civil war between the factions of the Alhambra and the Albaycin, or rather between El Zagal and El Chico, continued to convulse the city of Granada.

The tidings of the investment of Velez Malaga at length roused the attention of the old men and the alfaquis, whose heads were not heated by the daily broils. They spread themselves through the city, and endeavoured to arouse the people to a sense of their common danger.

"Why," said they, "continue these brawls between brethren and kindred? What battles are these, where even triumph is ignominious, and the victor blushes and conceals his scars? Behold the Christians ravaging the land won

by the valour and blood of your forefathers, dwelling in the houses they have built, sitting under the trees they have planted, while your brethren wander about, houseless and desolate. Do you wish to seek your real foe? He is encamped on the mountain of Bentomiz. Do you want a field for the display of your valour? You will find it before the walls of Velez Malaga."

When they had roused the spirit of the people, they made their way to the rival kings, and addressed them with like remonstrances. Hamel Aben Zarrex, the inspired santon, reproached El Zagal with his blind and senseless ambition. "You are striving to be king," said he bitterly, "yet suffer the kingdom to be lost."

El Zagal found himself in a perplexing dilemma. He had a double war to wage, with the enemy without and the enemy within. Should the Christians gain possession of the seacoast, it would be ruinous to the kingdom; should he leave Granada to oppose them, his vacant throne might be seized on by his nephew. He made a merit of necessity; and, pretending to yield to the remonstrances of

the alfaquis, endeavoured to compromise with Boabdil. He expressed deep concern at the daily losses of the country, caused by the dissensions of the capital; an opportunity now presented itself to retrieve all by a blow. The Christians had, in a manner, put themselves in a tomb between the mountains; nothing remained but to throw the earth upon them. He offered to resign the title of king, to submit to the government of his nephew, and fight under his standard; all he desired was to hasten to the relief of Velez Malaga, and to take full vengeance on the Christians.

Boabdil spurned his proposition as the artifice of a hypocrite and a traitor. "How shall I trust a man," said he, "who has murdered my father and my kindred by treachery, and repeatedly sought my own life, both by violence and stratagem?"

El Zagal foamed with rage and vexation; but there was no time to be lost. He was beset by the alfaquis and the nobles of his court; the youthful cavaliers were hot for action, the common people loud in their complaints that the richest cities were abandoned to the enemy. The old warrior was naturally fond

of fighting; he saw also, that to remain inactive would endanger both crown and kingdom, whereas a successful blow would secure his popularity in Granada. He had a much more powerful force than his nephew, having lately received reinforcements from Baza, Guadix, and Almaria; he could march therefore with a large force, and yet leave a strong garrison in the Alhambra. He formed his measures accordingly, and departed suddenly in the night, at the head of one thousand horse and twenty thousand foot. He took the most unfrequented roads along the chain of mountains extending from Granada to the height of Bentomiz, and proceeded with such rapidity, as to arrive there before King Ferdinand had notice of his approach.

The Christians were alarmed one evening by the sudden blazing of great fires on the mountain, about the fortress of Bentomiz. By the ruddy light they beheld the flash of weapons and the array of troops, and they heard the distant sound of Moorish drums and trumpets. The fires of Bentomiz were answered by fires on the towers of Velez Malaga. The shouts of "El Zagal! El Zagal!" echoed along

the cliffs and resounded from the city, and the Christians found that the old warrior-king of Granada was on the mountain above their camp.

The spirits of the Moors were suddenly raised to a pitch of the greatest exultation, while the Christians were astonished to see this storm of war ready to burst upon their heads. The Count de Cabra, with his accustomed eagerness when there was a king in the field, would fain have scaled the heights, and attacked El Zagal before he had time to form his camp; but Ferdinand, who was more cool and wary, restrained him. To attack the height would be to abandon the siege. He ordered every one, therefore, to keep vigilant watch at his post, and to stand ready to defend it to the utmost, but on no account to sally forth and attack the enemy.

All night the signal fires kept blazing along the mountains, rousing and animating the whole country. The morning sun rose over the lofty summit of Bentomiz on a scene of martial splendour. As its rays glanced down the mountain, they lighted up the white tents of the Christian cavaliers, cresting its lower

prominences, their pennons and ensigns fluttering in the morning breeze. The sumptuous pavilion of the king, with the holy standard of the cross, and the royal banners of Castile and Arragon, dominated the encampment. Beyond lay the city, its lofty castle and numerous towers glistening with arms; while above all, and just on the profile of the height, in the full blaze of the rising sun, were descried the tents of the Moor, his turbaned troops clustering about them, and his infidel banners floating against the sky. Columns of smoke rose where the night fire had blazed, and the clash of the Moorish cymbal, the bray of the trumpet, and the neigh of steeds, were faintly heard from those airy heights. So pure and transparent is the atmosphere in this region, that every object can be distinctly seen at a great distance, and the Christians were able to behold the formidable hosts of foes, that were gathering on the summits of the surrounding mountains.

One of the first measures of the Moorish king was to detach a large force under Rodovan de Vanegas, alcayde of Granada, to fall upon the convoy of ordnance, which stretched

for a great distance through the mountain defiles. Ferdinand had anticipated this attempt, and sent the commander of Leon with a body of horse and foot to reinforce the master of Alcantara. El Zagal, from his mountain height, beheld the detachment issue from the camp, and immediately recalled Rodovan de Vanegas. The armies now remained quiet for a time, the Moor looking grimly down upon the Christian camp, like a tiger meditating a bound upon his prey. The Christians were in fearful jeopardy; a hostile city below them, a powerful army above them, and on every side mountains filled with implacable foes.

After El Zagal had maturely consulted the situation of the Christian camp, and informed himself of all the passes of the mountain, he conceived a plan to surprise the enemy, which he flattered himself would ensure their ruin, and perhaps the capture of King Ferdinand. He wrote a letter to the alcayde of the city, commanding him, in the dead of the night, on a signal fire being made from the mountain, to sally forth with all his troops, and fall furiously upon the camp. The king

would, at the same time, rush down with his army from the mountain, and assail it on the opposite side, thus overwhelming it at the hour of deep repose. This letter he despatched by a renegado Christian, who knew all the secret roads of the country, and, if taken, could pass himself for a Christian who had escaped from captivity.

The fierce El Zagal, confident in the success of his stratagem, looked down upon the Christians as his devoted victims. As the sun went down, and the long shadows of the mountains stretched across the vega, he pointed with exultation to the camp below, apparently unconscious of the impending danger. "Alla achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great! Behold the unbelievers are delivered into our hands: their king and choicest chivalry will soon be at our mercy. Now is the time to show the courage of men, and by one glorious victory retrieve all that we have lost. Happy he who falls fighting in the cause of the prophet: he will at once be transported to the paradise of the faithful, and surrounded by immortal houries! Happy he who shall

survive victorious: he will behold Granada, an earthly paradise, once more delivered from its foes, and restored to all its glory!" The words of El Zagal were received with acclamations by his troops, who waited impatiently for the appointed hour to pour down from their mountain hold upon the Christians.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Result of the stratagem of El Zagal to surprise King Ferdinand.

Queen Isabella and her court had remained at Cordova, in great anxiety for the result of the royal expedition. Every day brought tidings of the difficulties which attended the transportation of the ordnance and munitions, and of the critical situation of the army.

While in this state of anxious suspense, couriers arrived with all speed from the frontiers, bringing tidings of the sudden sally of El Zagal from Granada to surprise the Christian camp. All Cordova was in consternation. The destruction of the Andalusian chivalry among the mountains of this very neighbourhood was called to mind; it was feared, that similar ruin was about to burst forth, from rocks and precipices, upon Ferdinand and his army.

Queen Isabella shared in the public alarm; but it served to rouse all the energies of her

heroic mind. Instead of uttering idle apprehensions, she sought only how to avert the danger. She called upon all the men of Andalusia, under the age of seventy, to arm and hasten to the relief of their sovereign; and she prepared to set out with the first levies.

The grand cardinal of Spain, old Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, in whom the piety of the saint and the wisdom of the counsellor were mingled with the fire of the cavalier, offered high pay to all horsemen who would follow him to aid their king and the Christian cause; and, buckling on armour, prepared to lead them to the scene of danger.

The summons of the queen roused the quick Andalusian spirit. Warriors, who had long since given up fighting, and had sent their sons to battle, now seized the sword and lance that were rusting on the wall, and marshalled forth their gray-headed domestics and their grandchildren for the field. The great dread was, that all aid would arrive too late. El Zagal and his host had passed like a storm through the mountains, and it was feared the tempest had already burst upon the Christian camp.

In the mean while the night had closed, which had been appointed by El Zagal for the execution of his plan. He had watched the last light of day expire, and all the Spanish camp remained tranquil. As the hours wore away, the camp fires were gradually extinguished. No drum or trumpet sounded from below; nothing was heard but now and then the heavy tread of troops, or the echoing tramp of horses, the usual patroles of the camp, and the changes of the guard. El Zagal restrained his own impatience, and that of his troops, until the night should be advanced, and the camp sunk in that heavy sleep from which men are with difficulty awakened, and, when awakened, so prone to be bewildered and dismayed.

At length the appointed hour arrived. By order of the Moorish king a bright flame sprung up from the height of Bentomiz; but El Zagal looked in vain for the responding light from the city. His impatience could brook no longer delay: he ordered the advance of the army to descend the mountain defile, and attack the camp. The defile was narrow, and overhung by rocks. As the troops proceeded, they came suddenly, in a shadowy hollow, upon a dark

mass of Christian warriors. A loud shout burst forth, and the Christians rushed to assail them. The Moors, surprised and disconcerted, retreated in confusion to the height. When El Zagal heard of a Christian force posted in the defile, he doubted some counter plan of the enemy. He gave orders to light the mountain fires. On a signal given, bright flames sprung out on every height, from great pyres of wood prepared for the purpose. Cliff blazed out after cliff, until the whole atmosphere was in a glow of furnace light. The ruddy glare lit up the glens and passes of the mountains, and fell strongly upon the Christian camp, revealing all its tents, and every post and bulwark. Wherever El Zagal turned his eyes, he beheld the light of his fires flashed back from cuirass, and helm, and sparkling lance; he beheld a grove of spears planted in every pass, every assailable point bristling with arms, and squadrons of horse and foot, in battle array, awaiting his attack.

In fact, the letter of El Zagal to the alcayde of Velez Malaga had been intercepted by the vigilant Ferdinand, and the renegado messenger hanged, and secret measures taken,

after the night had closed in, to give the enemy a warm reception. El Zagal saw that his plan of surprise was discovered and foiled: furious with disappointment, he ordered his troops forward to the attack. They rushed down the defile with loud cries, but were again encountered by the mass of Christian warriors, being the advance guard of the army commanded by Don Hurtado de Mendoza, brother of the grand cardinal. The Moors were again repulsed, and retreated up the heights. Don Hurtado would have pursued them; but the ascent was steep and rugged, and easily defended by the Moors. A sharp action was kept up through the night with crossbows, darts, and arquebusses; the cliffs echoed with deafening uproar, while the fires, blazing upon the mountains, threw a lurid and uncertain light upon the scene.

When the day dawned, and the Moors saw that there was no coöperation from the city, they began to slacken in their ardour: they beheld also every pass of the mountain filled with Christian troops, and began to apprehend an assault in return. Just then King Ferdinand sent the Marquis of Cadiz, with horse and foot,

to seize upon a height occupied by a battalion of the enemy. The marquis assailed the Moors with his usual intrepidity, and soon put them to flight. The others, who were above, seeing their companions flying, were seized with a sudden alarm. They threw down their arms and retreated. One of those unaccountable panics which now and then seize upon great bodies of people, and to which the light-spirited Moors were very prone, now spread through the camp. They were terrified they knew not why, or at what. They threw away swords, lances, breastplates, crossbows, everything that could burden or impede their flight, and, spreading themselves wildly over the mountains, fled headlong down the defiles. They fled, without pursuers, from the glimpse of each other's arms, from the sound of each other's footsteps. Rodovan de Vanegas, the brave alcayde of Granada, alone succeeded in collecting a body of the fugitives: he made a circuit with them through the passes of the mountains, and, forcing his way across a weak part of the Christian lines, galloped towards Velez Malaga. The rest of the Moorish host was completely scattered. In vain did El Zagal

and his knights attempt to rally them; they were left almost alone, and had to consult their own security by flight. The Marquis of Cadiz, finding no opposition, ascended from height to height, cautiously reconnoitring, and fearful of some stratagem or ambush. All, however, was quiet. He reached, with his men, the place which the Moorish army had occupied: the heights were abandoned, and strewed with cuirasses, cimeters, crossbows, and other weapons. His force was too small to pursue the enemy, and he returned to the royal camp laden with the spoils.

King Ferdinand at first could not credit so signal and miraculous a defeat. He suspected some lurking stratagem. He ordered, therefore, that a strict watch should be maintained throughout the camp, and every one be ready for instant action. The following night a thousand cavaliers and hidalgos kept guard about the royal tent, as they had done for several preceding nights, nor did the king relax this vigilance, until he received certain intelligence that the army was completely scattered, and El Zagal flying in confusion.

The tidings of this rout, and of the safety

of the Christian army, arrived at Cordova just as the reinforcements were on the point of setting out. The anxiety and alarm of the queen and the public were turned to transports of joy and gratitude. The forces were disbanded, solemn processions were made, and *Te Deums* chanted in the churches for so signal a victory.

CHAPTER XLIX.

How the people of Granada rewarded the valour of El Zagal.

THE daring spirit of the old warrior, Muley Abdalla el Zagal, in sallying forth to defend his territories, while he left an armed rival in his capital, had struck the people of Granada with admiration. They recalled his former exploits, and again anticipated some hardy achievement from his furious valour. Couriers from the army reported its formidable position on the height of Bentomiz. For a time there was a pause in the bloody commotions of the city; all attention was turned to the blow about to be struck at the Christian camp. The same considerations, which diffused anxiety and terror through Cordova, swelled every bosom with exulting confidence in Granada. The Moors expected to hear of another massacre, like that in the mountains of Malaga. "El Zagal has again entrapped the enemy!" was the cry.

"The power of the unbelievers is about to be struck to the heart; and we shall soon see the Christian king led captive to the capital!" Thus the name of El Zagal was on every tongue. He was extolled as the saviour of the country, the only one worthy of wearing the Moorish crown. Boabdil was reviled as basely remaining passive while his country was invaded; and so violent became the clamour of the populace, that his adherents trembled for his safety.

While the people of Granada were impatiently looking for tidings of the anticipated victory, scattered horsemen came spurring across the vega. They were fugitives from the Moorish army, and brought the first incoherent account of its defeat. Every one who attempted to tell the tale of this unaccountable panic and dispersion was as if bewildered by the broken recollection of some frightful dream. He knew not how or why it came to pass. He talked of a battle in the night among rocks and precipices, by the glare of bale-fires; of multitudes of armed foes in every pass, seen by gleams and flashes; of the sudden horror that seized upon the army at daybreak, its headlong flight and

total dispersion. Hour after hour the arrival of other fugitives confirmed the story of ruin and disgrace.

In proportion to their recent vaunting was the humiliation that now fell upon the people of Granada. There was a universal burst, not of grief, but indignation.

They confounded the leader with the army; the deserted with those who had abandoned him; and El Zagal, from being their idol, became the object of their execration. He had sacrificed the army; he had disgraced the nation; he had betrayed the country. He was a dastard, a traitor; he was unworthy to reign!

On a sudden, one among the multitude cried out, "Long live Boabdil el Chico!" The cry was echoed on all sides, and every one shouted, "Long live Boabdil el Chico! long live the legitimate king of Granada! and death to all usurpers!" In the excitement of the moment they thronged to the albaycin, and those, who had lately besieged Boabdil with arms, now surrounded his palace with acclamations. The keys of the city and of all the fortresses were laid at his feet; he was borne

in state to the Alhambra, and once more seated, with all due ceremony, on the throne of his ancestors.

Boabdil had by this time become so accustomed to be crowned and uncrowned by the multitude, that he put no great faith in the duration of their loyalty. He knew, that he was surrounded by hollow hearts, and that most of the courtiers of the Alhambra were secretly devoted to his uncle. He ascended the throne as the rightful sovereign, who had been dispossessed of it by usurpation, and he ordered the heads of four of the principal nobles to be struck off, who had been most zealous in support of the usurper. Executions of this kind were matters of course on any change of Moorish government; and Boabdil was extolled for his moderation and humanity, in being content with so small a sacrifice. The factions were awed into obedience; the populace, delighted with any change, extolled Boabdil to the skies, and the name of Muley Abdalla el Zagal was for a time a by-word of scorn and opprobrium throughout the city.

Never was any commander more astonished and confounded by a sudden reverse than

El Zagal. The evening had seen him with a powerful army at his command, his enemy within his grasp, and victory about to cover him with glory, and to consolidate his power. The morning beheld him a fugitive among the mountains; his army, his prosperity, his power, all dispelled he knew not how; gone like a dream of the night. In vain had he tried to stem the headlong flight of the soldiery. He saw his squadrons breaking and dispersing among the cliffs of the mountains, until, of all his host, only a handful of cavaliers remained faithful to him. With these he made a gloomy retreat towards Granada, but with a heart full of foreboding. When he drew near the city, he paused on the banks of the Xenil, and sent forth scouts to collect intelligence. They returned with dejected countenances. "The gates of Granada," said they, "are closed against you. The banner of Boabdil floats on the tower of the Alhambra."

El Zagal turned his steed, and departed in silence. He retreated to the town of Almunecar, and from thence to Almeria, places which still remained faithful to him. Restless and uneasy at being so distant from the ca-

pital, he again changed his abode and repaired to the city of Guadix, within a few leagues of Granada. Here he remained, endeavouring to rally his forces, and preparing to avail himself of any change in the fluctuating politics of the metropolis.

CHAPTER L.

Surrender of Velez Malaga, and other places.

The people of Velez Malaga had beheld the camp of Muley Abdalla el Zagal covering the summit of Bentomiz, and glittering in the last rays of the setting sun. During the night they had been alarmed and perplexed by signal fires on the mountain, and by the distant sound of battle. When the morning broke, the Moorish army had vanished as if by enchantment. While the inhabitants were lost in wonder and conjecture, a body of cavalry, the fragment of the army saved by Rodovan de Vanegas, the brave alcayde of Granada, came galloping to the gates. The tidings of the strange discomfiture of the host filled the city with consternation; but Rodovan exhorted the people to continue their resistance. He was devoted to El Zagal, and confident in his skill and prowess; and felt assured, that he would soon collect his scattered forces, and

return with fresh troops from Granada. The people were comforted by the words and encouraged by the presence of Rodovan, and they had still a lingering hope, that the heavy artillery of the Christians might be locked up in the impassable defiles of the mountains. This hope was soon at an end. The very next day they beheld long laborious lines of ordnance slowly moving into the Spanish camp; lombards, ribadoquines, catapultas, and cars laden with munitions, while the escort, under the brave master of Alcantara, wheeled in great battalions into the camp, to augment the force of the besiegers.

The intelligence, that Granada had shut its gates against El Zagal, and that no reinforcements were to be expected, completed the despair of the inhabitants; even Rodovan himself lost confidence, and advised capitulation.

The terms were arranged between the alcayde and the noble Count de Cipientes. The latter had been prisoner of Rodovan at Granada, who had treated him with chivalrous courtesy. They had conceived a mutual esteem for each other, and met as ancient friends.

Ferdinand granted favourable conditions; for

he was eager to proceed against Malaga. The inhabitants were permitted to depart with their effects, except their arms, and to reside, if they chose it, in Spain, in any place distant from the sea. One hundred and twenty Christians of both sexes were rescued from captivity by the surrender of Velez Malaga, and were sent to Cordova, where they were received with great tenderness by the queen, and her daughter the Infanta Isabella, in the famous cathedral, in the midst of public rejoicings for the victory.

The capture of Velez Malaga was followed by the surrender of Bentomiz, Comares, and all the towns and fortresses of the Axarquia, which were strongly garrisoned, and discreet and valiant cavaliers appointed as their alcaydes. The inhabitants of nearly forty towns of the Alpuzarra mountains also sent deputations to the Castilian sovereigns, taking the oath of allegiance as Mudchares, or Moslem vassals.

About the same time came letters from Boabdil el Chico, announcing to the sovereigns the revolution of Granada in his favour.

He solicited kindness and protection for the inhabitants who had returned to their allegiance, and for those of all other places which should renounce allegiance to his uncle. By this means, he observed, the whole kingdom of Granada would soon be induced to acknowledge his sway, and would be held by him in faithful vassalage to the Castilian crown.

The catholic sovereigns complied with his request. Protection was immediately extended to the inhabitants of Granada, permitting them to cultivate their fields in peace, and to trade with the Christian territories in all articles excepting arms, being provided with letters of surety from some Christian captain or alcayde. The same favour was promised to all other places that within six months should renounce El Zagal, and come under allegiance to the younger king. Should they not do so within that time, the sovereigns threatened to make war upon them, and conquer them for themselves. This measure had a great effect in inducing many to return to the standard of Boabdil.

Having made every necessary arrangement

for the government and security of the newly conquered territory, Ferdinand turned his attention to the great object of his campaign, the reduction of Malaga.

CHAPTER LI.

Of the city of Malaga and its inhabitants.

The city of Malaga lies in the lap of a fertile valley, surrounded by mountains, excepting on the part which lies open to the sea. As it was one of the most important, so it was one of the strongest cities of the Moorish kingdom. It was fortified by walls of prodigious strength, studded with a great number of huge towers. On the land side it was protected by a natural barrier of mountains, and, on the other, the waves of the Mediterranean beat against the foundations of its massive bulwarks.

At one end of the city, near the sea, on a high mound, stood the alcazaba or citadel, a fortress of great strength. Immediately above this rose a steep and rocky mount, on the top of which, in old times had been a pharos, or lighthouse, from which the height derived

its name of Gibralfaro*. It was at present crowned by an immense castle, which, from its lofty and cragged situation, its vast walls and mighty towers, was deemed impregnable. It communicated with the alcazaba by a covered way, six paces broad, leading down between two walls, along the profile or ridge of the rock. The castle of Gibralfaro commanded both citadel and city, and was capable, if both were taken, of maintaining a siege.

Two large suburbs adjoined the city: in the one towards the sea were dwelling-houses of the most opulent inhabitants, adorned with hanging gardens; the other, on the land side, was thickly peopled, and surrounded by strong walls and towers.

Malaga possessed a brave and numerous garrison, and the common people were active, hardy, and resolute; but the city was rich and commercial, and under the habitual control of numerous opulent merchants, who dreaded the ruinous consequences of a siege. They were little zealous for the warlike renown of

* A corruption of Gibel-fano, the hill of the lighthouse.

their city, and longed rather to participate in the enviable security of property, and the lucrative privileges of safe traffic with the Christian territories, granted to all places which declared for Boabdil. At the head of these gainful citizens was Ali Dordux, a mighty merchant, of uncounted wealth, whose ships traded to every port of the Levant, and whose word was a law in Malaga.

Ali Dordux assembled the most opulent and important of his commercial brethren, and they repaired in a body to the alcazaba, where they were received by the alcayde, Albozen Connexa, with that deference generally shown to men of their great local dignity and power of purse. Ali Dordux was ample and stately in his form, and fluent and emphatic in his discourse. His eloquence had an effect, therefore, upon the alcayde, as he represented the hopelessness of a defence of Malaga, the misery that must attend a siege, and the ruin that must follow a capture by force of arms. On the other hand, he set forth the grace that might be obtained from the Castilian sovereigns by an early and voluntary acknowledgment of Boabdil as king, the peaceful pos-

session of their property, and the profitable commerce with the Christian ports that would be allowed them. He was seconded by his weighty and important coadjutors; and the alcayde, accustomed to regard them as the arbiters of the affairs of the place, yielded to their united counsels. He departed, therefore, with all speed to the Christian camp, empowered to arrange a capitulation with the Castilian monarch, and in the mean time his brother remained in command of the alcazaba.

There was, at this time, as alcayde, in the old crag-built castle of Gibralfaro, a warlike and fiery Moor, an implacable enemy of the Christians. This was no other than Hamet Zeli, surnamed El Zegri, the once formidable alcayde of Ronda, and the terror of its mountains. He had never forgiven the capture of his favourite fortress, and panted for vengeance on the Christians. Notwithstanding his reverses, he had retained the favour of El Zagal, who knew how to appreciate a bold warrior of the kind, and had placed him in command of this important fortress of Gibralfaro.

Hamet el Zegri had gathered round him the remnant of his band of Gomeres, with

others of the same tribe. These fierce warriors were nestled, like so many war-hawks, about their lofty cliff. They looked down with martial contempt upon the commercial city of Malaga, which they were placed to protect; or rather, they esteemed it only for its military importance and its capability of defence. They held no communion with its trading, gainful inhabitants, and even considered the garrison of the alcazaba as their inferiors. War was their pursuit and passion; they rejoiced in its turbulent and perilous scenes; and, confident in the strength of the city, and, above all, of their castle, they set at defiance the menace of Christian invasion. There were among them, also, many apostate Moors, who had once embraced Christianity, but had since recanted, and had fled from the vengeance of the inquisition. These were desperadoes, who had no mercy to expect should they again fall into the hands of the enemy.

Such were the fierce elements of the garrison of Gibralfaro; and its rage may easily be conceived at hearing, that Malaga was to be given up without a blow; that they were to

sink into Christian vassals, under the intermediate sway of Boabdil el Chico, and that the alcayde of the alcazaba had departed to arrange the terms of capitulation.

Hamet el Zegri determined to avert, by desperate means, the threatened degradation. He knew that there was a large party in the city faithful to El Zagal, being composed of warlike men, who had taken refuge from the various mountain towns which had been captured. Their feelings were desperate as their fortunes, and, like Hamet, they panted for revenge upon the Christians. With these he had a secret conference, and received assurances of their adherence to him in any measures of defence. As to the council of the peaceful inhabitants, he considered it unworthy the consideration of a soldier, and he spurned at the interference of the wealthy merchant, Ali Dordux, in matters of warfare.

"Still," said Hamet el Zegri, "let us proceed regularly." So he descended with his Gomeres to the citadel, entered it suddenly, put to death the brother of the alcayde and such of the garrison as made any demur, and then summoned the principal inhabitants

to deliberate on measures for the welfare of the city*.

The wealthy merchants again mounted to the citadel, excepting Ali Dordux, who refused to obey the summons. They entered with hearts filled with awe, for they found Hamet surrounded by his grim African guard, and all the array of military power, and they beheld the bloody traces of the recent massacre.

Hamet el Zegri rolled a dark and searching eye upon the assembly. "Who," said he, "is loyal and devoted to Muley Abdalla el Zagal?" Every one present asserted his loyalty. "Good!" said Hamet, "and who is ready to prove his devotion to his sovereign by defending this his important city to the last extremity?" Every one present expressed his readiness. "Enough," observed Hamet: "the alcayde, Albozen Connexa, has proved himself a traitor to his sovereign and to you all; for he has conspired to deliver the place to the Christians. It behoves you to choose some other commander, capable of defending your city against the approaching enemy." The

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 82.

assembly declared unanimously, that there could be none so worthy of the command as himself. So Hamet el Zegri was appointed alcayde of Malaga, and immediately proceeded to man the forts and towns with his partisans, and to make every preparation for a desperate resistance.

Intelligence of these occurrences put an end to the negotiations between King Ferdinand and the superseded alcayde Albozen Connexa, and it was supposed there was no alternative but to lay siege to the place. The Marquis of Cadiz, however, found at Velez a Moorish cavalier of some note, a native of Malaga, who offered to tamper with Hamet el Zegri for the surrender of the city; or, at least, of the castle of Gibralfaro. The marquis communicated this to the king. "I put this business and the key of my treasury into your hand," said Ferdinand: "act, stipulate, and disburse, in my name, as you think proper."

The marquis armed the Moor with his own lance, cuirass, and target, and mounted him on one of his own horses. He equipped also, in similar style, another Moor, his companion

and relation. They bore secret letters to Hamet from the marquis, offering him the town of Coin in perpetual inheritance, and four thousand doblas in gold, if he would deliver up Gibralfaro; together with large sums to be distributed among his officers and soldiers; and he held out unlimited rewards for the surrender of the city*.

Hamet had a warrior's admiration for the Marquis of Cadiz, and received his messengers with courtesy, in his fortress of Gibralfaro. He even listened to their propositions with patience, and dismissed them in safety, though with an absolute refusal. The marquis thought his reply was not so peremptory as to discourage another effort. The emissaries were despatched, therefore, a second time, with further propositions. They approached Malaga in the night; but found the guards doubled, patroles abroad, and the whole place on the alert. They were discovered, pursued, and only saved themselves by the fleetness of their steeds, and their knowledge of the passes of the mountains.

Finding all attempts to tamper with the

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 82.

faith of Hamet el Zegri utterly futile, King Ferdinand publicly summoned the city to surrender; offering the most favourable terms in case of immediate compliance, but threatening captivity to all the inhabitants in case of resistance.

The message was delivered in presence of the principal inhabitants, who, however, were too much in awe of the stern alcayde to utter a word. Hamet el Zegri then rose haughtily, and replied, that the city of Malaga had not been confided to him to be surrendered, but defended; and the king should witness how he acquitted himself of his charge*.

The messengers returned with formidable accounts of the force of the garrison, the strength of the fortifications, and the determined spirit of the commander and his men. The king immediately sent orders to have the heavy artillery forwarded from Antequera; and, on the seventh of May, marched with his army towards Malaga.

* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 74.

CHAPTER LII.

Advance of King Ferdinand against Malaga.

THE army of Ferdinand advanced in lengthened line, glittering along the foot of the mountains which border the Mediterranean; while a fleet of vessels, freighted with heavy artillery and warlike munitions, kept pace with it, at a short distance from the land, covering the sea with a thousand gleaming sails. When Hamet el Zegri saw this force approaching, he set fire to the houses of the suburbs which adjoined the walls, and sent forth three battalions to encounter the advance guard of the enemy.

The Christian army drew near to the city at that end where the castle and rocky height of Gibralfaro defend the seabord. Immediately opposite to the castle, and about two bow-shots' distance, and between it and the high chain of mountains, was a steep and rocky hill, commanding a pass through which the Christians must march to penetrate to the vega, and

surround the city. Hamet el Zegri ordered the three battalions to take their stations, one on this hill, another in the pass near the castle, and a third on the side of the mountain near the sea.

A body of Spanish foot soldiers of the advance guard, sturdy mountaineers of Gallicia, sprang forward to climb the side of the height next the sea; at the same time a number of cavaliers and hidalgos of the royal household attacked the Moors who guarded the pass below. The Moors defended their posts with obstinate valour. The Gallicians were repeatedly overpowered and driven down the hill, but as often rallied; and, being reinforced by the hidalgos and cavaliers, returned to the assault. This obstinate struggle lasted for six hours. The strife was of a deadly kind, not merely with crossbows and arquebuses, but hand to hand, with swords and daggers: no quarter was claimed or given on either side: they fought not to make captives, but to slay. It was but the advance guard of the Christian army that was engaged: so narrow was the pass along the coast, that the army could proceed only in file. Horse and foot, and beasts of burden, were crowded one upon another, impeding

each other, and blocking up the narrow and rugged defile. The soldiers heard the uproar of the battle, the sound of trumpets, and the war cries of the Moors, but tried in vain to press forward to the assistance of their companions.

At length a body of foot-soldiers of the Holy Brotherhood climbed, with great difficulty, the steep side of the mountain which overhung the pass, and advanced with seven banners displayed. The Moors, seeing this force above them, abandoned the pass in despair.

The battle was still raging on the height. The Gallicians, though supported by Castilian troops, under Don Hurtado de Mendoza and Garcilasso de la Vega, were severely pressed, and roughly handled by the Moors. At length a brave standard-bearer, Luys Mazedo by name, threw himself into the midst of the enemy, and planted his banner on the summit. The Gallicians and Castilians, stimulated by this noble self devotion, followed him, fighting desperately, and the Moors were at length driven to their castle of Gibralfaro*.

This important height being taken, the pass

* Pulgar, Cronica.

lay open to the army: but by this time evening was advancing, and the host was too weary and exhausted to seek proper situations for the encampment. The king, attended by several grandees and cavaliers, went the rounds at night, stationing outposts towards the city, and guards and patroles to give the alarm on the least movement of the enemy. All night the Christians lay upon their arms, lest there should be some attempt to sally forth and attack them.

When the morning dawned, the king gazed with admiration at this city, which he hoped soon to add to his dominions. It was surrounded on one side by vineyards, gardens, and orchards, which covered the hills with verdure; on the other side its walls were bathed by the smooth and tranquil sea. Its vast and lofty towers and prodigious castles showed the labours of magnanimous men, in former times, to protect their favourite abode. Hanging gardens, groves of oranges, citrons, and pomegranates, with tall cedars and stately palms, were mingled with the stern battlements and towers, bespeaking the opulence and luxury that reigned within.

In the mean time the Christian army poured through the pass, and throwing out its columns, and extending its lines, took possession of every vantage-ground around the city. King Ferdinand surveyed the ground, and appointed the stations of the different commanders.

The important mount, which had cost so evident a struggle, and which faced the powerful fortress of Gibralfaro, was given in charge to Roderigo Ponce de Leon, the Marquis of Cadiz, who in all sieges claimed the post of danger. He had several noble cavaliers, with their retainers, in his encampment, which consisted of fifteen hundred horse, and fourteen thousand foot; and extended from the summit of the mount to the margin of the sea, completely blocking up the approach to the city on that side. From this post a line of encampments extended quite round the city to the seabord, fortified by bulwarks and deep ditches; while a fleet of armed ships and galleys stretched before the harbour, so that the place was completely invested by sea and land. The various parts of the valley now resounded with the din of preparation, and were filled with artificers preparing warlike engines and mu-

nitions; armourers and smiths, with glowing forges and deafening hammers; carpenters and engineers constructing machines wherewith to assail the walls; stonecutters shaping stone balls for the ordnance; and burners of charcoal preparing fuel for the furnaces and forges.

When the encampment was formed, the heavy ordnance was landed from the ships, and mounted in various parts of the camp. Five huge lombards were placed on the mount, commanded by the Marquis of Cadiz, so as to bear upon the castle of Gibralfaro.

The Moors made strenuous efforts to impede these preparations. A heavy fire was kept up from their ordnance upon the men employed in digging trenches or constructing batteries, so that the latter had to work principally in the night. The royal tents had been stationed conspicuously and within reach of the Moorish batteries, but were so warmly assailed that they had to be removed behind a hill.

When the works were completed, the Christian batteries opened in return, and kept up a tremendous cannonade, while the fleet, approaching the land, assailed the city vigorously on the opposite side.

It was a glorious and delectable sight, observes Fray Antonio Agapida, to behold this infidel city thus surrounded by sea and land by a mighty Christian force. Every mound in its circuit was, as it were, a little city of tents, bearing the standard of some renowned catholic warrior. Besides the warlike ships and galleys which lay before the place, the sea was covered with innumerable sails, passing and repassing, appearing and disappearing, being engaged in bringing supplies for the subsistence of the army. It would have seemed a vast spectacle contrived to recreate the eye, had not the volleying bursts of flame and smoke from the ships, which appeared to lie asleep on the quiet sea, and the thunder of ordnance from camp and city, from tower and battlement, told the deadly warfare that was waging.

At night the scene was far more direful than in the day. The cheerful light of the sun was gone; there was nothing but the flashes of artillery, or the baleful gleams of combustibles thrown into the city, and the conflagration of the houses. The fire kept up from the Christian batteries was incessant; there were seven great lombards, in particular, called the Seven Sisters

of Ximenes, which did tremendous execution. The Moorish ordnance replied in thunder from the walls; Gibralfaro was wrapped in volumes of smoke, rolling about its base; and Hamet el Zegri and his Gomeres looked out with triumph upon the tempest of war they had awakened. "Truly they were so many demons incarnate," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapadi, "who were permitted by Heaven to enter into and possess this infidel city for its perdition."

CHAPTER LIII.

Siege of Malaga.

THE attack on Malaga by sea and land was kept up for several days with tremendous violence, but without producing any great impression, so strong were the ancient bulwarks of the city. The Count de Cifuentes was the first to signalize himself by any noted achievement. A main tower of the suburb had been shattered by the ordnance, and the battlements demolished, so as to yield no shelter to its defenders. Seeing this, the count assembled a gallant band of cavaliers of the royal household, and advanced to take it by storm. They applied scaling ladders, and mounted, sword in hand. The Moors, having no longer battlements to protect them, descended to a lower floor, and made furious resistance from the windows and loopholes. They poured down boiling pitch and rosin, and hurled stones and darts and arrows on the assailants. Many of

the Christians were slain; their ladders were destroyed by flaming combustibles, and the count was obliged to retreat from before the tower. On the following day he renewed the attack with superior force, and, after a severe combat, succeeded in planting his victorious banner on the tower.

The Moors now assailed the tower in their turn. They undermined the part towards the city, placed props of wood under the foundation, and, setting fire to them, drew off to a distance. In a little while the props gave way, the foundation sank, the tower was rent, part of its wall fell with a tremendous noise, many of the Christians were thrown out headlong, and the rest were laid open to the missiles of the enemy.

By this time, however, a breach had been made in the wall adjoining the tower, and troops poured in to the assistance of their comrades. A continued battle was kept up for two days and a night by reinforcements from camp and city. The parties fought backwards and forwards through the breach of the wall, with alternate success, and the vicinity of the town was strewed with the dead and wounded. At

length the Moors gradually gave way, disputing every inch of ground, until they were driven into the city; and the Christians remained masters of the greater part of the suburb.

This partial success, though gained with great toil and bloodshed, gave temporary animation to the Christians. They soon found, however, that the attack on the main works of the city was a much more arduous task. The garrison contained veterans who had served in many of the towns captured by the Christians. They were no longer confounded and dismayed by the battering ordnance and other strange engines of foreign invention, and had become expert in parrying their effects, in repairing breaches, and erecting counterworks.

The Christians, accustomed of late to speedy conquests of Moorish fortresses, became impatient of the slow progress of the siege. Many were apprehensive of a scarcity of provisions, from the difficulty of subsisting so numerous a host in the heart of the enemies' country, where it was necessary to transport supplies across rugged and hostile mountains, or subjected to the uncertainties of the seas. Many were also alarmed at a pestilence which broke out in the

neighbouring villages, and some were so overcome by these apprehensions, as to abandon the camp, and return to their homes.

Several of the loose and worthless hangers-on, that infest all great armies, hearing these murmurs, thought that the siege would soon be raised, and deserted to the enemy, hoping to make their fortunes. They gave exaggerated accounts of the alarms and discontents of the army, and represented the troops as daily returning home in bands. Above all, they declared, that the gunpowder was nearly exhausted, so that the artillery would soon be useless. They assured the Moors, therefore, that, if they persisted in their defence a little longer, the king would be obliged to draw off his forces, and abandon the siege.

The reports of these renegadoes gave fresh courage to the garrison. They made vigorous sallies upon the camp, harassing it by night and day, and obliging every part to be guarded with the most painful vigilance. They fortified the weak parts of their walls with ditches and palisadoes, and gave every manifestation of a determined and unyielding spirit.

Ferdinand soon received intelligence of the

reports which had been carried to the Moors. He understood, that they had been informed, likewise, that the queen was alarmed for the safety of the camp, and had written repeatedly, urging him to abandon the siege. As the best means of disproving all these falsehoods, and of destroying the vain hopes of the enemy, Ferdinand wrote to the queen, entreating her to come and take up her residence in the camp.

CHAPTER LIV.

Siege of Malaga continued. Obstinacy of Hamet el Zegri.

Great was the enthusiasm of the army, when they beheld their patriot queen advancing in state, to share the toils and dangers of her people. Isabella entered the camp, attended by the dignitaries, and the whole retinue of her court, to manifest, that this was no temporary visit. On one side of her was her daughter, the infanta; on the other, the grand cardinal of Spain; and Hernando de Talavera, the prior of Praxo, confessor to the queen, followed, with a great train of prelates, courtiers, cavaliers, and ladies of distinction. The cavalcade moved in calm and stately order through the camp, softening the iron aspect of war by this array of courtly grace and female beauty.

Isabella had commanded, that, on her coming to the camp, the horrors of war should be suspended, and fresh offers of peace made to the

enemy. On her arrival, therefore, there had been a cessation of firing throughout the camp. A messenger was at the same time despatched to the besieged, informing them of her being in the camp, and of the determination of the sovereigns to make it their settled residence, until the city should be taken. The same terms were offered, in case of immediate surrender, that had been granted to Velez Malaga, but the inhabitants were threatened with captivity and the sword, should they persist in their defence.

Hamet el Zegri received this message with haughty contempt, and dismissed the messenger without deigning a reply.

"The Christian sovereigns," said he, "have made this offer, in consequence of their despair. The silence of their batteries proves the truth of what has been told us, that their powder is exhausted. They have no longer the means of demolishing our walls; and, if they remain much longer, the autumnal rains will interrupt their convoys, and fill their camp with famine and disease. The first storm will disperse their fleet, which has no neighbouring port of shelter. Africa will then

be open to us, to procure reinforcements and supplies."

The words of Hamet el Zegri were hailed as oracular by his adherents. Many of the peaceful part of the community, however, ventured to remonstrate, and to implore him to accept the proffered mercy. The stern Hamet silenced them with a terrific threat. He declared, that whoever should talk of capitulating, or should hold any communication with the Christians, should be put to death. His fierce Gomeres, like true men of the sword, acted upon the menace of their chieftain as upon a written law, and, having detected several of the inhabitants in secret correspondence with the enemy, they set upon and slew them, and then confiscated their effects. This struck such terror into the citizens, that those who had been loudest in their murmurs became suddenly mute, and were remarked as evincing the greatest bustle and alacrity in the defence of the city.

When the messenger returned to the camp, and reported the contemptuous reception of the royal message, King Ferdinand was exceedingly indignant. Finding the cessation of

firing, on the queen's arrival, had encouraged a belief among the enemy, that there was a scarcity of powder in the camp, he ordered a general discharge from every battery. This sudden burst of war from every quarter soon convinced the Moors of their error, and completed the confusion of the citizens, who knew not which most to dread, their assailants or their defenders, the Christians or the Gomeres.

That evening the sovereigns visited the encampment of the Marquis of Cadiz, which commanded a view over a great part of the city and the camp. The tent of the marquis was of great magnitude, furnished with hangings of rich brocade, and French cloth of the rarest texture. It was in the oriental style, and, as it crowned the height, with the surrounding tents of other cavaliers, all sumptuously furnished, presented a gay and silken contrast to the opposite towers of Gibralfaro. Here a splendid collation was served up to the sovereigns; and the courtly revel that prevailed on this chivalrous encampment, the glitter of pageantry, and the bursts of festive music, made more striking the gloom and

silence that reigned over the dark Moorish castle.

The Marquis of Cadiz, while it was yet light, conducted his royal visitors to every point that commanded a view of the warlike scene below. He caused the heavy lombards also to be discharged, that the queen and the ladies of the court might witness the effect of those tremendous engines. The fair dames were filled with awe and admiration, as the mountain shook beneath their feet with the thunder of the artillery, and they beheld great fragments of the Moorish walls tumbling down the rocks and precipices.

While the good marquis was displaying these things to his royal guests, he lifted up his eyes, and, to his astonishment, beheld his own banner hanging out from the nearest tower of Gibralfaro. The blood mantled in his cheek, for it was a banner which he had lost at the time of the memorable massacre of the heights of Malaga. To make this taunt more evident, several of the Gomeres displayed themselves upon the battlements, arrayed in the helmets and cuirasses of some of the ca-

valiers, slain or captured on that occasion*. The Marquis of Cadiz restrained his indignation, and held his peace; but several of his cavaliers vowed loudly to revenge this cruel bravado on the ferocious garrison of Gibralfaro.

* Diego de Valera, Cronica, MS.

CHAPTER LV.

Attack of the Marquis of Cadiz upon Gibralfaro.

THE Marquis of Cadiz was not a cavalier that readily forgave an injury or an insult. On the morning after the royal banquet, his batteries opened a tremendous fire upon Gibralfaro. All day the encampment was wrapped in wreaths of smoke; nor did the assault cease with the day, but throughout the night there was an incessant flashing and thundering of the lombards, and the following morning the assault rather increased than slackened in its fury. The Moorish bulwarks were no proof against these formidable engines. In a few days the lofty tower, on which the taunting banner had been displayed, was shattered; a smaller tower, in its vicinity, reduced to ruins; and a great breach made in the intervening walls.

Several of the hot-spirited cavaliers were eager for storming the breach sword in hand;

others, more cool and wary, pointed out the rashness of such an attempt; for the Moors, working indefatigably in the night, had digged a deep ditch within the breach, and had fortified it with palisadoes and a high breastwork. All, however, agreed, that the camp might safely be advanced near to the ruined walls, and that it ought to be so placed, in return for the insolent defiance of the enemy.

The Marquis of Cadiz felt the temerity of the measure; but he was unwilling to damp the zeal of these high-spirited cavaliers; and, having chosen the post of danger in the camp, it did not become him to decline any service, merely because it might appear perilous. He ordered his outposts, therefore, to be advanced within a stonesthrow of the breach, but exhorted the soldiers to maintain the utmost vigilance.

The thunder of the batteries had ceased; the troops, exhausted by two nights' fatigue and watchfulness, and apprehending no danger from the dismantled walls, were half of them asleep; the rest were scattered about in negligent security. On a sudden, upwards of two thousand Moors sallied forth from the castle,

led on by Abraham Zenete, the principal captain under Hamet. They fell with fearful havoc upon the advance guard, slaying many of them in their sleep, and putting the rest to headlong flight. The marquis was in his tent, about a bowshot distance, when he heard the tumult of the onset, and beheld his men flying in confusion. He rushed forth, followed by his standardbearers. " Turn again, cavaliers!" exclaimed he; " turn again! I am here, Ponce de Leon! To the foe! to the foe!" The flying troops stopped at hearing his well-known voice, rallied under his banner, and turned upon the enemy. The encampment by this time was roused; several cavaliers from the adjoining stations had hastened to the scene of action, with a number of Gallicians, and soldiers of the Holy Brotherhood. An obstinate and bloody contest ensued. The ruggedness of the place, the rocks, chasms, and declivities, broke it into numerous combats. Christian and Moor fought hand to hand, with swords and daggers; and often, grappling and struggling, rolled together down the precipices.

The banner of the marquis was in danger

of being taken. He hastened to its rescue, followed by some of his bravest cavaliers. They were surrounded by the enemy, and several of them cut down. Don Diego Ponce de Leon, brother to the marquis, was wounded by an arrow; and his son-in-law, Luis Ponce, was likewise wounded: they succeeded, however, in rescuing the banner, and bearing it off in safety. The battle lasted for an hour: the height was covered with killed and wounded; and the blood flowed in streams down the rocks. At length, Abraham Zenete being disabled by the thrust of a lance, the Moors gave way, and retreated to the castle.

They now opened a galling fire from their battlements and towers, approaching the breaches, so as to discharge their crossbows and arquebuses into the advance guard of the encampment. The marquis was singled out: the shot fell thick about him, and one passed through his buckler, and struck upon his cuirass, but without doing him any injury. Every one now saw the danger and inutility of approaching the camp thus near to the castle; and those who had counselled it were now urgent that it should be withdrawn. It

was accordingly removed back to its original ground, from which the marquis had most reluctantly advanced it. Nothing but his valour and timely aid had prevented this attack from ending in a total rout of all that part of the army.

Many cavaliers of distinction fell in this contest; but the loss of none was felt more deeply than that of Ortega de Prado, captain of escaladors. He was one of the bravest men in the service; the same who had devised the first successful blow of the war, the storming of Alhama, where he was the first to plant and mount the scaling ladders. He had always been high in the favour and confidence of the noble Ponce de Leon, who knew how to appreciate and avail himself of the merits of all able and valiant men*.

* Zurita. Mariana. Abarca.

CHAPTER LVI.

Siege of Malaga continued. Stratagems of various kinds.

Great were the exertions now made, both by the besiegers and the besieged, to carry on this contest with the utmost vigour. Hamet el Zegri went the rounds of the walls and towers, doubling the guards, and putting every thing into the best posture of defence. The garrison was divided into parties of a hundred, to each of which a captain was appointed. Some were to patrole; others to sally forth, and skirmish with the enemy; and others to hold themselves ready armed and in reserve. Six albatozas, or floating batteries, were manned, and armed with pieces of artillery, to attack the fleet.

On the other hand, the Castilian sovereigns kept open a communication, by sea, with various parts of Spain, from which they received provisions of all kinds. They ordered

supplies of powder, also, from Valencia, Barcelona, Sicily, and Portugal. They made great preparations for storming the city. Towers of wood were constructed, to move on wheels, each capable of holding one hundred men. They were furnished with ladders, to be thrown from their summits to the tops of the walls; and within those ladders others were incased, to be let down for the descent of the troops into the city. There were gallipagos, or tortoises, also; being great wooden shields, covered with hides, to protect the assailants, and those who undermined the walls.

Secret mines were commenced in various places. Some were intended to reach to the foundations of the walls, which were to be propped up with wood, ready to be set on fire; others were to pass under the walls, and remain ready to be broken open, so as to give entrance to the besiegers. At these mines the army worked day and night; and, during these secret preparations, the ordnance kept up a fire upon the city, to divert the attention of the besieged.

In the mean time, Hamet el Zegri displayed

wonderful vigour and ingenuity in defending the city, and in repairing, or fortifying by deep ditches, the breaches made by the enemy. He noted, besides, every place where the camp might be assailed with advantage; and gave the besieging army no repose, night or day. While his troops sallied on the land, his floating batteries attacked the besiegers on the sea; so that there was incessant skirmishing. The tents, called the queen's hospital, were crowded with wounded; and the whole army suffered, from constant watchfulness and fatigue. To guard against the sudden assaults of the Moors, the trenches were deepened, and palisadoes erected in front of the camp; and in that part facing Gibralfaro, where the rocky heights did not admit of such defences, a high rampart of earth was thrown up. The cavaliers Garcilasso de la Vega, Juan de Zuniga, and Diego de Atayde, were appointed to go the rounds, and keep vigilant watch, that these fortifications were maintained in good order.

In a little while, Hamet discovered the mines secretly commenced by the Christians.

He immediately ordered countermines. The soldiers mutually worked until they met, and fought hand to hand, in these subterranean passages. The Christians were driven out of one of their mines; fire was set to the wooden framework, and the mine destroyed. Encouraged by this success, the Moors attempted a general attack upon the mines and the besieging fleet. The battle lasted for six hours, on land and water, above and below ground, on bulwark and in trench and mine. The Moors displayed wonderful intrepidity; but were finally repulsed at all points, and obliged to retire into the city, where they were closely invested, without the means of receiving any assistance from abroad.

The horrors of famine were now added to the other miseries of Malaga. Hamet el Zegri, with the spirit of a man bred up to war, considered every thing as subservient to the wants of the soldier, and ordered all the grain in the city to be gathered and garnered up for the sole use of those who fought. Even this was dealt out sparingly; and each soldier received four ounces of bread in the morn-

ing, and two in the evening, for his daily allowance.

The wealthy inhabitants, and all those peacefully inclined, mourned over a resistance, which brought destruction upon their houses, death into their families, and which they saw must end in their ruin and captivity. Still, none of them dared to speak openly of capitulation, or even to manifest their grief, lest they should awaken the wrath of their fierce defenders. They surrounded their civic champion, Ali Dordux, the great and opulent merchant, who had buckled on shield and cuirass, and taken spear in hand for the defence of his native city; and, with a large body of the braver citizens, had charge of one of the gates and a considerable portion of the walls. Drawing Ali Dordux aside, they poured forth their griefs to him in secret. "Why," said they, "should we suffer our native city to be made a mere bulwark and fighting place for foreign barbarians and desperate men? They have no families to care for, no property to lose, no love for the soil, and no value for their lives. They fight to gratify a thirst for blood, or a

desire for revenge; and will fight on until Malaga be made a ruin, and its people slaves. Let us think and act for ourselves, our wives, and our children. Let us make private terms with the Christians before it is too late, and so save ourselves from destruction."

The bowels of Ali Dordux yearned towards his fellow-citizens. He bethought him also of the sweet security of peace, and the bloodless, yet gratifying, triumphs of gainful commerce. The idea likewise of a secret negotiation or bargain with the Castilian sovereigns, for the redemption of his native city, was more conformable to his accustomed habits than this violent appeal to arms; for though he had, for a time, assumed the warrior, he had not forgotten the merchant. Ali Dordux communed, therefore, with the citizen-soldiers under his command, and they readily conformed to his opinion. Concerting together, they wrote a proposition to the Castilian sovereigns, offering to admit the army into the part of the city intrusted to their care, on receiving assurance of protection for the lives and property of the inhabitants. This writing they delivered to a trusty emissary, to take to

the Christian camp; appointing the hour and place of his return, that they might be ready to admit him unperceived.

The Moor made his way in safety to the camp, and was admitted to the presence of the sovereigns. Eager to gain the city without further cost of blood or treasure, they gave a written promise to grant the conditions; and the Moor set out joyfully on his return. As he approached the walls where Ali Dordux and his confederates were waiting to receive him, he was descried by a patroling band of Gomeres, and considered a spy coming from the camp of the besiegers. They issued forth, and seized him, in sight of his employers, who gave themselves up for lost. The Gomeres had conducted him nearly to the gate, when he escaped from their grasp, and fled. They endeavoured to overtake him, but were encumbered with armour; he was lightly clad, and he fled for his life. One of the Gomeres paused, and, levelling his crossbow, let fly a bolt, which pierced the fugitive between the shoulders: he fell, and was nearly within their grasp; but rose again, and, with a desperate effort, attained the Christian camp. The Go-

meres gave over the pursuit, and the citizens returned thanks to Alla for their deliverance from this fearful peril. As to the faithful messenger, he died of his wound, shortly after reaching the camp, consoled with the idea, that he had preserved the secret and the lives of his employers.

CHAPTER LVII.

Sufferings of the people of Malaga.

The sufferings of Malaga spread sorrow and anxiety among the Moors; and they dreaded lest this beautiful city, once the bulwark of the kingdom, should fall into the hands of the unbelievers. The old warrior king, Abdalla el Zagal, was still sheltered in Guadix, where he was slowly gathering together his shattered forces. When the people of Guadix heard of the danger and distress of Malaga, they urged to be led to its relief; and the alfaquis admonished El Zagal not to desert so righteous and loyal a city in its extremity. His own warlike nature made him feel a sympathy for a place, that made so gallant a resistance; and he despatched as powerful a reinforcement as he could spare, under conduct of a chosen captain, with orders to throw themselves into the city.

Intelligence of this reinforcement reached

Boabdil el Chico, in his royal palace of the Alhambra. Filled with hostility against his uncle, and desirous of proving his loyalty to the Castilian sovereigns, he immediately sent forth a superior force of horse and foot, to intercept the detachment. A sharp conflict ensued; the troops of El Zagal were routed with great loss, and fled back in confusion to Guadix.

Boabdil, not being accustomed to victories, was flushed with this melancholy triumph. He sent tidings of it to the Castilian sovereigns, accompanied with rich silks, boxes of Arabian perfume, a cup of gold richly wrought, and a female captive of Rebeda, as presents to the queen; and four Arabian steeds, magnificently caparisoned, a sword and dagger richly mounted, and several albornozes and other robes, sumptuously embroidered, for the king. He entreated them, at the same time, always to look upon him with favour, as their devoted vassal.

Boabdil was fated to be unfortunate even in his victories. His defeat of the forces of his uncle, destined to the relief of unhappy Malaga, shocked the feelings, and cooled the

loyalty, of many of his best adherents. The mere men of traffic might rejoice in their golden interval of peace, but the chivalrous spirits of Granada spurned a security purchased by such sacrifices of pride and affection. The people at large, having gratified their love of change, began to question, whether they had acted generously by their old fighting monarch. "El Zagal," said they, "was fierce and bloody, but then he was true to his country: he was an usurper, but then he maintained the glory of the crown which he usurped. If his sceptre was a rod of iron to his subjects, it was a sword of steel against their enemies. This Boabdil sacrifices religion, friends, country, every thing, to a mere shadow of royalty, and is content to hold a rush for a sceptre."

These factious murmurs soon reached the ears of Boabdil, and he apprehended another of his customary reverses. He sent in all haste to the Castilian sovereigns, beseeching military aid to keep him on his throne. Ferdinand graciously complied with a request so much in unison with his policy. A detachment of one thousand cavalry, and two thou-

sand infantry, were despatched, under the command of Don Fernandez Gonsalez, of Cordova, subsequently renowned as the grand captain. With this succour, Boabdil expelled from the city all those who were hostile to him, and in favour of his uncle. He felt secure in these troops, from their being distinct, in manners, language, and religion, from his subjects, and compromised with his pride, in thus exhibiting that most unnatural and humiliating of all regal spectacles, a monarch supported on his throne by foreign weapons, and by soldiers hostile to his people.

Nor was Boabdil el Chico the only Moorish sovereign that sought protection from Ferdinand and Isabella. A splendid galley, with lateen sails, and several banks of oars, came one day into the harbour of Malaga, displaying the standard of the crescent, but likewise a white flag in sign of amity. An ambassador landed from it within the Christian lines. He came from the King of Tremezan, and brought presents similar to those of Boabdil, consisting of Arabian coursers, with bits, stirrups, and other furniture of gold,

together with costly Moorish mantles: for the queen there were sumptuous shawls, robes, and silken stuffs, ornaments of gold, and exquisite oriental perfumes.

The King of Tremezan had been alarmed at the rapid conquests of the Spanish arms, and startled by the descent of several Spanish cruisers on the coast of Africa. He craved to be considered a vassal to the Castilian sovereigns, and that they would extend such favour and security to his ships and subjects as had been shown to other Moors, who had submitted to their sway. He requested a painting of their arms, that he and his subjects might recognise and respect their standard, whenever they encountered it. At the same time he implored their clemency towards unhappy Malaga, and that its inhabitants might experience the same favour, that had been shown towards the Moors of other captured cities.

This embassy was graciously received by the Castilian sovereigns. They granted the protection required; ordering their commanders to respect the flag of Tremezan, unless it should be found rendering assistance to the

enemy. They sent also to the Barbary monarch their royal arms, moulded in escutcheons of gold a hand's-breadth in size*.

While thus the chances of assistance from without daily decreased, famine raged in the city. The inhabitants were compelled to eat the flesh of horses, and many died of hunger. What made the sufferings of the citizens the more intolerable was, to behold the sea covered with ships, daily arriving with provisions for the besiegers. Day after day, also, they saw herds of fat cattle and flocks of sheep drawn into the camp. Wheat and flour were piled in large mounds in the centre of the encampments, glaring in the sunshine, and tantalizing the wretched citizens, who, while they and their children were perishing with hunger, beheld prodigal abundance reigning within a bowshot of their walls.

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 84. Pulgar, part iii. c. 86.

CHAPTER LVIII.

How a Moorish santon undertook to deliver the city of Malaga from the power of its enemies.

THERE lived at this time, in a hamlet in the neighbourhood of Guadix, an ancient Moor, of the name of Abraham Algerbi. He was a native of Guerba, in the kingdom of Tunis, and had for several years led the life of a santon or hermit. The hot sun of Africa had dried his blood, and rendered him of an exalted yet melancholy temperament. He passed most of his time in meditation, prayer, and rigorous abstinence, until his body was wasted, and his mind bewildered, and he fancied himself favoured with divine revelations. The Moors, who have a great reverence for all enthusiasts of the kind, looked upon him as inspired, listened to all his ravings as veritable prophecies, and denominated him El Santo, or "the saint."

The woes of the kingdom of Granada had

long exasperated the gloomy spirit of this man; and he had beheld with indignation this beautiful country wrested from the dominion of the faithful, and becoming a prey to the unbelievers. He had implored the blessing of Allah on the troops which issued forth from Guadix for the relief of Malaga; but when he saw them return, routed and scattered by their own countrymen, he retired to his cell, shut himself up from the world, and was plunged for a time in the blackest gloom.

On a sudden he made his appearance again in the streets of Guadia; his face haggard, his form emaciated, but his eye beaming with fire. He said, that Allah had sent an angel to him, in the solitude of his cell, revealing to him a mode of delivering Malaga from its perils, and striking horror and confusion into the camp of the unbelievers. The Moors listened with eager credulity to his words: four hundred of them offered to follow him even to the death, and to obey implicitly his commands. Of this number many were Gomeres, anxious to relieve their countrymen, who formed part of the garrison of Malaga.

They traversed the kingdom by the wild and lonely passes of the mountains, concealing themselves in the day, and travelling only in the night, to elude the Christian scouts. At length they arrived at the mountains which tower above Malaga; and, looking down, beheld the city completely invested, a chain of encampments extending round it from shore to shore, and a line of ships blockading it by sea, while the continual thunder of artillery, and the smoke rising in various parts, showed, that the siege was pressed with great activity. The hermit scanned the encampments warily from his lofty height. He saw, that the part of the encampment of the Marquis of Cadiz, which was at the foot of the height, and on the margin of the sea, was the most assailable, the rocky soil not admitting ditches or palisadoes. Remaining concealed all day, he descended with his followers at night to the seacoast, and approached silently to the outworks. He had given them their instructions: they were to rush suddenly upon the camp, fight their way through, and throw themselves into the city.

It was just at the gray of the dawning, when

objects are obscurely visible, that they made this desperate attempt. Some sprang suddenly upon the sentinels; others rushed into the sea, and got round the works; others clambered over the breastworks. There was sharp skirmishing; a great part of the Moors were cut to pieces, but about two hundred succeeded in getting into the gates of Malaga.

The santon took no part in the conflict, nor did he endeavour to enter the city. His plans were of a different nature. Drawing apart from the battle, he threw himself on his knees, on a rising ground, and, lifting his hands to Heaven, appeared to be absorbed in prayer. The Christians, as they were searching for fugitives in the clefts of the rocks, found him at his devotions. He stirred not at their approach, but remained fixed as a statue, without changing colour, or moving a muscle. Filled with surprise, not unmixed with awe, they took him to the Marquis of Cadiz. He was wrapped in a coarse albornoz, or Moorish mantle; his beard was long and grizzled, and there was something wild and melancholy in his look, that inspired curiosity.

On being examined, he gave himself out as

a saint, to whom Allah had revealed the events, that were to take place in that siege. The marquis demanded when and how Malaga was to be taken. He replied, that he knew full well; but he was forbidden to reveal those important secrets, except to the king and queen. The good marquis was not more given to superstitious fancies than other commanders of his time; yet there seemed something singular and mysterious about this man: he might have some important intelligence to communicate; so he was persuaded to send him to the king and queen. He was conducted to the royal tent, surrounded by a curious multitude, exclaiming, "El Moro Santo!" for the news had spread through the camp, that they had taken a Moorish prophet.

The king, having dined, was taking his siesta, or afternoon's sleep, in his tent; and the queen, though curious to see this singular being, yet, from a natural delicacy and reserve, delayed until the king should be present. He was taken, therefore, to an adjoining tent, in which were Doña Beatrix de Bovadilla, Marchioness of Moya, and Don Alvaro of Portugal, son of the Duke of Braganza, with two or three attendants.

The Moor, ignorant of the Spanish tongue, had not understood the conversation of the guards, and supposed, from the magnificence of the furniture, and the silken hangings, that this was the royal tent. From the respect paid by the attendants to Don Alvaro and the marchioness, he concluded, that they were the king and queen.

He now asked for a draught of water. A jar was brought to him, and the guard released his arm, to enable him to drink. The marchioness perceived a sudden change in his countenance, and something sinister in the expression of his eye, and shifted her position to a more remote part of the tent. Pretending to raise the water to his lips, the Moor unfolded his albornoz so as to grasp a cimeter, which he wore concealed beneath; then, dashing down the jar, he drew his weapon, and gave Don Alvaro a blow on the head, that struck him to the earth, and nearly deprived him of life. Turning upon the marchioness, he then made a violent blow at her, but, in his eagerness and agitation, his cimeter caught in the drapery of the tent; the force of the blow was broken, and the weapon struck

harmless upon some golden ornaments of her head-dress *.

Ruy Lopez de Toledo, treasurer to the queen, and Juan de Belalcazar, a sturdy friar, who were present, grappled and struggled with the desperado; and immediately the guards who had conducted him from the Marquis of Cadiz fell upon him, and cut him to pieces †.

The king and queen, brought out of their tents by the noise, were filled with horror, when they learned the imminent peril from which they had escaped. The mangled body of the Moor was taken by the people of the camp, and thrown into the city from a catapult. The Gomeres gathered up the body, with deep reverence, as the remains of a saint; they washed and perfumed it, and buried it with great honour and loud lamentations. In revenge of his death, they slew one of their principal Christian captives; and, having tied his body upon an ass, they drove the animal forth into the camp.

From this time there was appointed an additional guard around the tents of the king

* Pietro Martyr, epist. 62.

† Cura de los Palacios.

and queen, composed of twelve hundred cavaliers of rank of the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon. No person was admitted to the royal presence armed. No Moor was allowed to enter the camp without a previous knowledge of his character and business; and on no account was any Moor to be introduced into the presence of the sovereigns.

An act of treachery of such a ferocious nature gave rise to a train of gloomy apprehensions. There were many cabins and sheds about the camp, constructed of branches of trees, which had become dry and combustible; and fears were entertained, that they might be set on fire by the Mudixares, or Moorish vassals, who visited the army. Some even dreaded, that attempts might be made to poison the wells and fountains. To quiet these dismal alarms, all Mudixares were ordered to leave the camp; and all loose idle loiterers, who could not give a good account of themselves, were taken into custody.

CHAPTER LIX.

How Hamet el Zegri was hardened in his obstinacy by the arts of a Moorish astrologer.

Among those followers of the santon that had effected their entrance into the city was a dark African, of the tribe of Gomeres, who was likewise a hermit, or dervise, and passed among the Moors for a holy and inspired man. No sooner were the mangled remains of his predecessor buried with the honours of martyrdom, than this dervise elevated himself in his place, and professed to be gifted with the spirit of prophecy. He displayed a white banner, which he assured the Moors was sacred; that he had retained it for twenty years, for some signal purpose; and that Allah had revealed to him, that under that banner the inhabitants of Malaga should sally forth upon the camp of the unbelievers, put it to utter rout, and banquet upon the provisions in which

it abounded*. The hungry and credulous Moors were elated at this prediction, and cried out to be led forth at once to the attack; but the dervise told them the time was not yet arrived, for every event had its allotted day in the decrees of fate; they must wait patiently, therefore, until the appointed time should be revealed to him by Heaven. Hamet el Zegri listened to the dervise with profound reverence, and his example had great effect in increasing the awe and deference of his followers. He took the holy man up into his strong hold of Gibralfaro, consulted him on all occasions, and hung out his white banner on the loftiest tower, as a signal of encouragement to the people of the city.

In the mean time, the prime chivalry of Spain was gradually assembling before the walls of Malaga. The army which had commenced the siege had been worn out by extreme hardships, having had to construct immense works, to dig trenches and mines, to mount guard by sea and land, to patrole the mountains, and to sustain incessant conflicts.

* Cura de los Palacios.

The sovereigns were obliged therefore to call upon various distant cities, for reinforcements of horse and foot. Many nobles, also, assembled their vassals, and repaired, of their own accord, to the royal camp.

Every little while, some stately galley or gallant caravel would stand into the harbour, displaying the well-known banner of some Spanish cavalier, and thundering from its artillery a salutation to the sovereigns, and a defiance to the Moors. On the land side also reinforcements would be seen, winding down the mountains to the sound of drum and trumpet, and marching into the camp with glistening arms, as yet unsullied by the toils of war.

One morning the whole sea was whitened by the sails, and vexed by the oars of ships and galleys bearing towards the port. One hundred vessels, of various kinds and sizes, arrived; some armed for warlike service, others deep freighted with provisions. At the same time, the clangor of drum and trumpet bespoke the arrival of a powerful force by land, which came pouring in lengthening columns into the camp.

This mighty reinforcement was furnished by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who reigned like a petty monarch over his vast possessions. He came with this princely force a volunteer to the royal standard, not having been summoned by the sovereigns, and he brought moreover a loan of twenty thousand doblas of gold.

When the camp was thus powerfully reinforced, Isabella advised, that new offers of an indulgent kind should be made to the inhabitants; for she was anxious to prevent the miseries of a protracted siege, or the effusion of blood that must attend a general attack. A fresh summons was therefore sent for the city to surrender, with a promise of life, liberty and property, in case of immediate compliance, but denouncing all the horrors of war, if the defence were obstinately continued.

Hamet el Zegri again rejected the offer with scorn. His main fortifications as yet were but little impaired, and were capable of holding out much longer; he trusted to the thousand evils and accidents that beset a besieging army, and to the inclemencies of the approaching season; and it is said he, as well

as his followers, had an infatuated belief in the predictions of the dervise.

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida does not scruple to affirm, that the pretended prophet of the city was an arch necromancer, or Moorish magician; "of which there be countless many," says he, "in the filthy sect of Mahomet;" and that he was leagued with the prince of the powers of the air, to endeavour to work the confusion and defeat of the Christian army. The worthy father asserts also, that Hamet employed him in a high tower of the Gibralfaro, which commanded a wide view over sea and land, where he wrought spells and incantations, with astrolabes and other diabolical instruments, to defeat the Christian ships and forces, whenever they were engaged with the Moors.

To the potent spells of this sorcerer he ascribes the perils and losses sustained by a party of cavaliers of the royal household, in a desperate combat to gain two towers of the suburb, near the gate of the city called La Puerta de Granada. The Christians, led on by Ruy Lopez de Toledo, the valiant treasurer of the queen, took, and lost, and retook

the towers, which were finally set on fire by the Moors, and abandoned to the flames by both parties. To the same malignant influence he attributes the damage done to the Christian fleet, which was so vigorously assailed by the albatozas, or floating batteries, of the Moors, that one ship of the Duke of Medina Sidonia was sunk, and the rest were obliged to retire.

"Hamet el Zegri," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "stood on the top of the high tower of Gibralfaro, and beheld this injury wrought upon the Christian force; and his proud heart was puffed up. And the Moorish necromancer stood beside him. And he pointed out to him the Christian host below, encamped on every eminence around the city, and covering its fertile valley, and the many ships floating upon the tranquil sea; and he bade him be strong of heart, for that, in a few days, all this mighty fleet would be scattered by the winds of Heaven; and that he should sally forth, under guidance of the sacred banner, and attack this host, and utterly defeat it, and make spoil of those sumptuous tents; and Ma-

laga should be triumphantly revenged upon her assailants. So the heart of Hamet was hardened like that of Pharaoh, and he persisted in setting at defiance the catholic sovereigns, and their army of saintly warriors."

CHAPTER LX.

Siege of Malaga continued. Destruction of a tower by Francisco Ramirez de Madrid.

Seeing the infatuated obstinacy of the besieged, the Christians now approached their works to the walls, gaining one position after another, preparatory to a general assault. Near the barrier of the city was a bridge with four arches, defended at each end by a strong and lofty tower, by which a part of the army would have to pass in making a general attack. The commander in chief of the artillery, Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, was ordered to take possession of this bridge. The approach to it was perilous in the extreme, from the exposed situation of the assailants, and the numbers of Moors that garrisoned the towers. Francisco Ramirez, therefore, secretly excavated a mine leading beneath the first tower, and placed a piece of ordnance, with its mouth upwards, immediately under the foundation, with a

train of powder to produce an explosion at the necessary moment.

When this was arranged, he advanced slowly with his forces in face of the towers, erecting bulwarks at every step, and gradually gaining ground, until he arrived near to the bridge. He then planted several pieces of artillery in his works, and began to batter the tower. The Moors replied bravely from their battlements; but in the heat of the combat the piece of ordnance under the foundation was discharged. The earth was rent open, a part of the tower overthrown, and several of the Moors torn to pieces: the rest took to flight, overwhelmed with terror at this thundering explosion bursting beneath their feet, and at beholding the earth vomiting flames and smoke; for never before had they witnessed such a stratagem in warfare. The Christians rushed forward and took possession of the abandoned post, and immediately commenced an attack upon the other tower, at the opposite end of the bridge, to which the Moors had retired. An incessant fire of crossbows and arquebuses was kept up between the rival towers, volleys

of stones were discharged, and no one dared to venture upon the intermediate bridge.

Francisco de Ramirez at length renewed his former mode of approach, making bulwarks as he advanced, while the Moors at the other end swept the bridge with their artillery. The combat was long and bloody, ferocious on the part of the Moors, patient and persevering on the part of the Christians. By slow degrees they accomplished their progress across the bridge, drove the enemy before them, and remained masters of this important pass.

For this valiant and skilful achievement, King Ferdinand, after the surrender of the city, conferred the dignity of knighthood upon Francisco Ramirez, in the tower which he had so gloriously gained*. The worthy padre, Fray Antonio Agapida, indulges in more than a page of extravagant eulogy, upon this invention of blowing up the foundation of the tower by a piece of ordnance, which he affirms to be the first instance on record of gunpowder being used in a mine.

* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 91.

CHAPTER LXI.

How the people of Malaga expostulated with Hamet el Zegri.

While the dervise was deluding the garrison of Malaga with vain hopes, the famine increased to a terrible degree. The Gomeres ranged about the city as though it had been a conquered place; taking by force whatever they found eatable in the houses of the peaceful citizens, and breaking open vaults and cellars, and demolishing walls, wherever they thought provisions might be concealed.

The wretched inhabitants had no longer bread to eat; the horseflesh also now failed them; and they were fain to devour skins and hides toasted at the fire, and to assuage the hunger of their children with vine leaves, cut up and fried in oil. Many perished of famine, or of the unwholesome food with which they endeavoured to relieve it; and many took refuge in the Christian camp, preferring captivity to the horrors which surrounded them.

At length the sufferings of the inhabitants became so great, as to conquer even their fears of Hamet and his Gomeres. They assembled before the house of Ali Dordux, the wealthy merchant, whose stately mansion was at the foot of the hill of the alcazaba; and they urged him to stand forth as their leader, and to intercede with Hamet el Zegri for a surrender. Ali Dordux was a man of courage as well as policy; he perceived also that hunger was giving boldness to the citizens, while he trusted it was subduing the fierceness of the soldiery. He armed himself, therefore, cap a pie, and undertook this dangerous parley with the alcayde. He associated with him an alfaqui, named Abrahen Alharis, and an important inhabitant, named Amar ben Amar; and they ascended to the fortress of Gibralfaro, followed by several of the trembling merchants.

They found Hamet el Zegri, not, as before, surrounded by ferocious guards, and all the implements of war; but in a chamber of one of the lofty towers, at a table of stone, covered with scrolls, and traced with strange characters and mystic diagrams; while instru-

ments of singular and unknown form lay about the room. Beside Hamet el Zegri stood the prophetic dervise, who appeared to have been explaining to him the mysterious inscriptions of the scrolls. His presence filled the citizens with awe; for even Ali Dordux considered him a man inspired.

The alfaqui, Abrahen Alharis, whose sacred character gave him boldness to speak, now lifted up his voice, and addressed Hamet el Zegri. "We implore you," said he solemnly, "in the name of the most powerful God, no longer to persist in a vain resistance, which must end in our destruction; but deliver up the city, while clemency is yet to be obtained. Think how many of our warriors have fallen by the sword; do not suffer those who survive to perish by famine. Our wives and children cry to us for bread, and we have none to give them. We see them expire in lingering agony before our eyes, while the enemy mocks our misery, by displaying the abundance of his camp. Of what avail is our defence? Are our walls, peradventure, more strong than the walls of Ronda? Are our warriors more brave than the defenders of Loxa? The walls of

Ronda were thrown down, and the warriors of Loxa had to surrender. Do we hope for succour? From whence are we to receive it? The time for hope is gone by. Granada has lost its power: it no longer possesses chivalry, commanders, or a king. Boabdil sits a vassal in the degraded walls of the Alhambra: El Zagal is a fugitive, shut up within the walls of Guadix. The kingdom is divided against itself: its strength is gone, its pride fallen, its very existence at an end. In the name of Allah, we conjure thee, who art our captain, be not our direst enemy; but surrender these ruins of our once happy Malaga, and deliver us from these overwhelming horrors."

Such was the supplication forced from the inhabitants by the extremity of their sufferings. Hamet el Zegri listened to the alfaqui without anger; for he respected the sanctity of his office. His heart, too, was at that moment lifted up with a vain confidence. "Yet a few days of patience," said he, "and all these evils will suddenly have an end. I have been conferring with this holy man, and find, that the time of our deliverance is at hand. The decrees of fate are inevitable: it

is written in the book of destiny, that we shall sally forth, and destroy the camp of the unbelievers, and banquet upon those mountains of grain, which are piled up in the midst of it. So Allah hath promised, by the mouth of this his prophet. Allah achbar! God is great! Let no man oppose the decrees of Heaven."

The citizens heard with profound reverence; for no true Moslem pretends to struggle against whatever is written in the book of fate. Ali Dordux, who had come prepared to champion the city, and to brave the ire of Hamet, humbled himself before this holy man; and gave faith to his prophecies as the revelations of Allah. So the deputies returned to the citizens, and exhorted them to be of good cheer. "A few days longer," said they, "and our sufferings are to terminate. When the white banner is removed from the tower, then look out for deliverance; for the hour of sallying forth will have arrived." The people retired to their houses with sorrowful hearts. They tried in vain to quiet the cries of their famishing children; and day by day, and hour by hour, their anxious eyes were turned to the sacred banner, which still continued to wave on the tower of Gibralfaro.

CHAPTER LXII.

How Hamet el Zegri sallied forth, with the sacred banner, to attack the Christian camp.

"The Moorish necromancer," observes the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "remained shut up in the tower of the Gibralfaro, devising devilish means to work mischief and discomfiture upon the Christians. He was daily consulted by Hamet el Zegri, who had great faith in those black and magic arts, which he had brought with him from the bosom of heathen Africa."

From the account given of this dervise and his incantations by the worthy father, it would appear, that he was an astrologer, and was studying the stars, and endeavouring to calculate the day and hour, when a successful attack might be made upon the Christian camp.

Famine had now increased to such a degree as to distress even the garrison of Gibralfaro; although the Gomeres had seized upon all the

provisions they could find in the city. Their passions were sharpened by hunger; and they became restless and turbulent, and impatient for action.

Hamet el Zegri was one day in council with his captains, perplexed by the pressure of events, when the dervise entered among them. "The hour of victory," exclaimed he, "is at hand! Allah has commanded, that to-morrow morning ye shall sally forth to the fight. I will bear before you the sacred banner, and deliver your enemies into your hands. Remember, however, that ye are but instruments in the hands of Allah, to take vengeance on the enemies of the faith. Go into battle, therefore, with pure hearts, forgiving each other all past offences; for those, who are charitable towards each other, will be victorious over the foe."

The words of the dervise were received with rapture. All Gibralfaro and the alcazaba resounded immediately with the din of arms; and Hamet sent throughout the towers and fortifications of the city, and selected the choicest troops and most distinguished captains for this eventful combat.

In the morning early, the rumour went

throughout the city, that the sacred banner had disappeared from the town of Gibralfaro, and all Malaga was roused to witness the sally that was to destroy the unbelievers. Hamet descended from his strong hold, accompanied by his principal captain, Abrahen Zenete, and followed by his Gomeres. The dervise led the way, displaying the white banner, the sacred pledge of victory. The multitude shouted, "Allah achbar!" and prostrated themselves before the banner as it passed. Even the dreaded Hamet was hailed with praises; for, in their hope of speedy relief, through the prowess of his arm, the populace forgot every thing but his bravery. Every bosom in Malaga was agitated by hope and fear; the old men, the women, and children,. and all who went not forth to battle, mounted on tower, and battlement, and roof, to watch a combat, that was to decide their fate.

Before sallying forth from the city, the dervise addressed the troops; reminding them of the holy nature of this enterprise, and warning them not to forget the protection of the sacred banner by any unworthy act. They were to press forward, fighting valiantly, and

granting no quarter. The gate was then thrown open, and the dervise issued forth, followed by the army. They directed their assault upon the encampments of the master of Santiago and the master of Calatrava, and came upon them so suddenly, that they killed and wounded several of the guards. Abrahen Zenete made his way into one of the tents, where he beheld several Christian striplings, just starting from their slumber. The heart of the Moor was suddenly touched with pity for their youth, or, perhaps, he scorned the weakness of the foe. He smote them with the flat, instead of the edge, of his sword. "Away, imps," cried he, "away to your mothers!" The fanatic dervise reproached him with his clemency. "I did not kill them," replied Zenete, "because I saw no beards*!"

The alarm was given in the camp, and the Christians rushed from all quarters to defend the gates of the bulwarks. Don Pedro Puertocarrero, senior of Moguer, and his brother, Don Alonzo Pacheco, planted themselves, with their followers, in the gateway of the encamp-

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 84.

ment of the master of Santiago, and bore the whole brunt of the battle until they were reinforced. The gate of the encampment of the master of Calatrava was, in like manner, defended by Lorenzo Saurez de Mendoza. Hamet el Zegri was furious at being thus checked, where he had expected a miraculous victory. He led his troops repeatedly to the attack, hoping to force the gates before succour should arrive. They fought with vehement ardour, but were as often repulsed; and every time they returned to the assault, they found their enemies doubled in number. The Christians opened a cross fire of all kinds of missiles from their bulwarks; the Moors could effect but little damage upon a foe thus protected behind their works, while they themselves were exposed from head to foot. The Christians singled out the most conspicuous cavaliers, the greater part of whom were either slain or wounded. Still the Moors, infatuated by the predictions of the prophet, fought desperately and devotedly; and they were furious to revenge the slaughter of their leaders. They rushed upon certain death, endeavouring madly to scale the bulwarks, or force the gates; and fell amidst

showers of darts and lances, filling the ditches with their mangled bodies.

Hamet el Zegri raged along the front of the bulwarks, seeking an opening for attack. He gnashed his teeth with fury, as he saw so many of his chosen warriors slain around him. He seemed to have a charmed life; for, though constantly in the hottest of the fight, amidst showers of missiles, he still escaped uninjured. Blindly confiding in the prophecy of victory, he continued to urge on his devoted troops. The dervise, too, ran like a maniac through the ranks, waving his white banner, and inciting the Moors, by howlings rather than by shouts. In the midst of his frenzy, a stone from a catapult struck him on the head, and dashed out his bewildered brains*.

When the Moors beheld their prophet slain, and his banner in the dust, they were seized with despair, and fled in confusion to the city. Hamet el Zegri made some effort to rally them, but was himself confounded by the fall of the dervise. He covered the flight of his broken forces, turning repeatedly upon their pursuers, and slowly making his retreat into the city.

* Garibay, lib. xviii. c. 33.

The inhabitants of Malaga witnessed from their walls, with trembling anxiety, the whole of this disastrous conflict. At the first onset, on seeing the guards of the camp put to flight, they exclaimed, "Allah has given us the victory!" and they sent up shouts of triumph. Their exultation, however, was turned into doubt, when they beheld their troops repulsed in repeated attacks. They could perceive, from time to time, some distinguished warrior laid low, and others brought back bleeding to the city. When, at length, the sacred banner fell, and the routed troops came flying to the gates, pursued and cut down by the foe, horror and despair seized upon the populace.

As Hamet el Zegri entered the gates, he was greeted with loud lamentations. Mothers, whose sons had been slain, shrieked curses after him as he passed. Some, in the anguish of their hearts, threw down their famishing babes before him, exclaiming, "Trample on them with thy horse's feet, for we have no food to give them, and we cannot endure their cries!" All heaped execrations on his head, as the cause of the woes of Malaga.

The warlike part of the citizens, also, and many warriors, who, with their wives and children, had taken refuge in Malaga from the mountain fortresses, now joined in the popular clamour; for their hearts were overcome by the sufferings of their families.

Hamet el Zegri found it impossible to withstand this torrent of lamentations, curses, and reproaches. His military ascendancy was at an end; for most of his officers, and the prime warriors of his African band, had fallen in this disastrous sally. Turning his back, therefore, upon the city, and abandoning it to its own councils, he retired, with the remnant of his Gomeres, to his strong hold in the Gibralfaro.

CHAPTER LXIII.

How the city of Malaga capitulated.

The people of Malaga, being no longer overawed by Hamet el Zegri and his Gomeres, turned to Ali Dordux, the magnanimous merchant, and put the fate of the city into his hands. He had already gained the alcaydes of the castle of the Genoese and of the citadel into his party; and, in the late confusion, had gained the sway over these important fortresses. He now associated himself with the alfaqui, Abrahen Alhariz, and four of the principal inhabitants; and, forming a provisional junta, they sent heralds to the Christian sovereigns, offering to surrender the city on certain terms, protecting the persons and property of the inhabitants, permitting them to reside as mudaxares, or tributary vassals, either in Malaga or elsewhere.

When these heralds arrived at the camp,

and made known their mission, the anger of Ferdinand was kindled. "Return to your fellow-citizens," said he, "and tell them, that the day of grace is gone by. They have persisted in a fruitless defence, until they are driven by necessity to capitulate: they must surrender unconditionally, and abide the fate of the vanquished. Those who merit death shall suffer death; those who merit captivity shall be made captives."

This stern reply spread consternation among the people of Malaga; but Ali Dordux comforted them, and undertook to go in person, and pray for favourable terms. When the people beheld this great merchant, who was so eminent in their city, departing with his associates on this mission, they plucked up heart, for they said, "Surely the Christian king will not turn a deaf ear to such a man as Ali Dordux!"

Ferdinand, however, would not even admit the ambassadors to his presence. "Send them to the devil," said he, in a great passion, to the commander of Leon. "I will not see them. Let them get back to their city. They shall

all surrender to my mercy as vanquished enemies *."

To give emphasis to this reply, he ordered a general discharge from all the artillery and batteries, and there was a great shout throughout the camp, and all the lombards and catapults, and other engines, thundered furiously upon the city, doing great damage.

Ali Dordux and his companions returned with downcast countenances, and could scarce make the reply of the Christian sovereign be heard, for the roaring of the artillery, the tumbling of the walls, and the cries of women and children. The citizens were greatly astonished and dismayed, when they found the little respect paid to their most eminent man; but the warriors who were in the city exclaimed, "What has this merchant to do with questions between men of battle? Let us not address the enemy as abject suppliants, who have no power to injure; but as valiant men, who have weapons in their hands."

So they despatched another message to the

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 84.

Christian sovereigns, offering to yield up the city, and all their effects, on condition of being secured in their personal liberty. Should this be denied, they declared, that they would hang from the battlements fifteen hundred Christian captives, male and female; that they would put all their old men, their women and children, into the citadel, set fire to the city, and sally forth sword in hand, to fight until the last gasp. " In this way," said they, " the Spanish sovereigns shall gain a bloody victory, and the fall of Malaga be renowned while the world endures."

Various debates now took place in the Christian camp. Many of the cavaliers were exasperated against Malaga for its long resistance, which had caused the death of many of their relations and favourite companions. It had long been a strong hold for Moorish depredators, and the mart where most of the warriors captured in the Axarquia had been exposed in triumph, and sold to slavery. They represented, moreover, that there were many Moorish cities yet to be besieged; and that an example ought to be made of Malaga, to prevent all obstinate resistance hereafter.

They advised, therefore, that all the inhabitants should be put to the sword*!

The humane heart of Isabella revolted at such sanguinary councils. She insisted, that their triumph should not be disgraced by cruelty. Ferdinand, however, was inflexible in refusing to grant any preliminary terms; insisting on an unconditional surrender. The people of Malaga now abandoned themselves to paroxysms of despair. On the one side, they saw famine and death; on the other, slavery and chains. The mere men of the sword, who had no families to protect, were loud for signalizing their fall by some illustrious action. "Let us sacrifice our Christian captives, and then destroy ourselves!" cried some. "Let us put all the women and children to death, set fire to the city, fall on the Christian camp, and die sword in hand!" cried others.

Ali Dordux gradually made his voice be heard amidst the general clamour. He addressed himself to the principal inhabitants, and to those who had children. "Let those who live by the sword die by the sword,"

* Puigar.

cried he; "but let us not follow their desperate councils. Who knows what sparks of pity may be awakened in the bosoms of the Christian sovereigns, when they behold our unoffending wives and daughters, and our helpless little ones! The Christian queen, they say, is full of mercy."

At these words the hearts of the unhappy people of Malaga yearned over their families; and they empowered Ali Dordux to deliver up the city to the mercy of the Castilian sovereigns.

The merchant now went to and fro, and had several communications with Ferdinand and Isabella; and interested several principal cavaliers in his cause. And he sent rich presents to the king and queen, of oriental merchandises, silks, and stuffs of gold, and jewels, and precious stones, and spices, and perfumes, and many other rare and sumptuous things, which he had accumulated in his great tradings with the East; and he gradually found favour in the eyes of the sovereigns *. Finding that there was nothing to be obtained for the city, he now, like a prudent man and able mer-

* MS. Chron. of Valera.

chant, began to negotiate for himself and his immediate friends.

He represented, that, from the first, they had been desirous of yielding up the city; but had been prevented by warlike and high-handed men, who had threatened their lives. He entreated, therefore, that mercy might be extended to them, and that they might not be confounded with the guilty.

The sovereigns had accepted the presents of Ali Dordux: how could they turn a deaf ear to his petition? So they granted a pardon to him, and to forty families which he named; and it was agreed, that they should be protected in their lives and property, and permitted to reside in Malaga as Mudexares or Moslem vassals; and to follow their customary pursuits*. All this being arranged, Ali Dordux delivered up twenty of the principal inhabitants, to remain as hostages until the whole city should be placed in the possession of the Christians.

Don Gutiere de Cardenas, senior commander of Leon, now entered the city, armed capapie, on horseback, and took possession,

* Cura de los Palacios.

in the name of the Castilian sovereigns. He was followed by his retainers, and by the captains and cavaliers of the army; and in a little while the standards of the cross, and of the blessed Santiago, and of the catholic sovereigns, were elevated on the principal tower of the alcazaba. When these standards were beheld from the camp, the queen, and the princess, and the ladies of the court, and all the royal retinue, knelt down, and gave thanks and praises to the holy Virgin, and to Santiago, for this great triumph of the faith; and the bishops, and other clergy who were present, and the choristers of the royal chapel, chanted *Te Deum laudamus*, and *Gloria in excelsis*.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Fulfilment of the prophecy of the dervise. Fate of Hamet el Zegri.

No sooner was the city delivered up, than the wretched inhabitants implored permission to purchase bread for themselves and their children, from the heaps of grain, which they had so often gazed at wistfully from their walls. Their prayer was granted; and they issued forth, with the famished eagerness of starving men. It was piteous to behold the struggles of these unhappy people, as they contended who first should have their necessities relieved.

"Thus," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "thus are the predictions of false prophets sometimes permitted to be verified; but always to the confusion of those who trust in them; for the words of the Moorish necromancer came to pass, that they should eat of those heaps of bread: but they ate of them in

humiliation and defeat, and with sorrow and bitterness of heart."

Dark and fierce were the feelings of Hamet el Zegri, as he looked down from the castle of Gibralfaro, and beheld the Christian legions pouring into the city, and the standard of the cross supplanting the crescent on the citadel. "The people of Malaga," said he, "have trusted to a man of trade, and he has trafficked them away; but let us not suffer ourselves to be bound, hand and foot, and delivered up as part of his bargain. We have yet strong walls around us, and trusty weapons in our hands. Let us fight until buried beneath the last tumbling tower of Gibralfaro; or, rushing down from among its ruins, carry havoc among the unbelievers, as they throng the streets of Malaga!"

The fierceness of the Gomeres, however, was broken. They could have died in the breach, had their castle been assailed; but the slow advances of famine subdued their strength without rousing their passions, and sapped the force both of soul and body. They were almost unanimous for a surrender.

It was a hard struggle for the proud spirit

of Hamet, to bow itself to ask for terms. Still he trusted, that the valour of his defence would gain him respect in the eyes of a chivalrous foe. "Ali," said he, "has negotiated like a merchant: I will capitulate as a soldier." He sent a herald, therefore, to Ferdinand, offering to yield up his castle, but demanding a separate treaty. The Castilian sovereign sent a laconic and stern reply: "He shall receive no terms, but such as have been granted to the community of Malaga."

For two days Hamet el Zegri remained brooding in his castle, after the city was in possession of the Christians. At length, the clamours of his followers compelled him to surrender. When the broken remnant of this fierce African garrison descended from their cragged fortress, they were so worn by watchfulness, famine, and battle, yet carried such a lurking fury in their eyes, that they looked more like fiends than men. They were all condemned to slavery, excepting Abrahen Zenete. The instance of clemency which he had shown, in refraining to harm the Spanish striplings on the last sally from Malaga, won him favourable terms. It was cited as a mag-

nanimous act by the Spanish cavaliers; and all admitted, that, though a Moor in blood, he possessed the Christian heart of a Castilian hidalgo *.

As to Hamet el Zegri, on being asked, what moved him to such hardened obstinacy, he replied, "When I undertook my command, I pledged myself to fight, in defence of my faith, my city, and my sovereign, until slain or made prisoner; and, depend upon it, had I had men to stand by me, I should have died fighting, instead of thus tamely surrendering myself, without a weapon in my hand."

"Such," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "were the diabolical hatred, and stiff-necked opposition, of this infidel to our holy cause. But he was justly served by our most catholic and high-minded sovereign, for his pertinacious defence of the city; for Ferdinand ordered, that he should be loaded with chains, and thrown into a dungeon †."

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 84.
† Pulgar, Cronica.

CHAPTER LXV.

How the Castilian sovereigns took possession of the city of Malaga, and how King Ferdinand signalized himself by his skill in bargaining with the inhabitants for their ransom.

One of the first cares of the conquerors, on entering Malaga, was to search for Christian captives. Nearly sixteen hundred, men and women, were found, and among them were persons of distinction. Some of them had been ten, fifteen, and twenty years in captivity. Many had been servants to the Moors, or labourers on public works, and some had passed their time in chains and dungeons. Preparations were made to celebrate their deliverance as a Christian triumph. A tent was erected, not far from the city, and furnished with an altar, and all the solemn decorations of a chapel. Here the king and queen waited to receive the Christian captives. They were assembled in the city, and marshalled forth in piteous procession. Many of them had still

the chains and shackles on their legs. They were wasted with famine, their hair and beards overgrown and matted, and their faces pale and haggard from long confinement. When they beheld themselves restored to liberty, and surrounded by their countrymen, some stared wildly about, as if in a dream, others gave way to frantic transports, but most of them wept for joy. All present were moved to tears by so touching a spectacle. When the procession arrived at what is called the Gate of Granada, it was met by a great concourse from the camp, with crosses and pennons, who turned and followed the captives, singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving. When they came in presence of the king and queen, they threw themselves on their knees, and would have kissed their feet, as their saviours and deliverers; but the sovereigns prevented such humiliation, and graciously extended to them their hands. They then prostrated themselves before the altar, and all present joined them in giving thanks to God, for their liberation from this cruel bondage. By orders of the king and queen, their chains were then taken off, and they were clad in

decent raiment, and food was set before them. After they had ate and drank, and were refreshed and invigorated, they were provided with money, and all things necessary for their journey, and sent joyfully to their homes.

While the old chroniclers dwell with becoming enthusiasm on this pure and affecting triumph of humanity, they go on, in a strain of equal eulogy, to describe a spectacle of a different nature. It so happened, that there were found in the city twelve of those renegado Christians, who had deserted to the Moors, and conveyed false intelligence during the siege. A barbarous species of punishment was inflicted upon them, borrowed, it is said, from the Moors, and peculiar to these wars. They were tied to stakes, in a public place, and horsemen exercised their skill in transpiercing them with pointed reeds, hurled at them while careering at full speed, until the miserable victims expired beneath their wounds. Several apostate Moors, also, who, having embraced Christianity, had afterwards relapsed into their early faith, and had taken refuge in Malaga from the vengeance of the inquisition, were publicly burnt. "These," says an old

Jesuit historian exultingly, "these were the tilts of reeds; and the illuminations most pleasing for this victorious festival, and for the catholic piety of our sovereigns*!"

When the city was cleansed from the impurities and offensive odours which had collected during the siege, the bishops, and other clergy who accompanied the court, and the choir of the royal chapel, walked in procession to the principal mosque, which was consecrated, and entitled Santa Maria de la Incarnacion. This done, the king and queen entered the city, accompanied by the grand cardinal of Spain, and the principal nobles and cavaliers of the army, and heard a solemn mass. The church was then elevated into a cathedral, and Malaga was made a bishopric, and many of the neighbouring towns were comprehended in its diocese. The queen took up her residence in the alcazaba, in the apartments of her valiant treasurer, Ruy Lopez, whence she had a view of the whole city; but the king

* Los renegados fueron acanavareados; y los conversos quemados: y estos fueron los cañas y luminarias mas alegres por la fiesta de la vitoria, para la piedad catholica de nuestros reyes. Abarca, Anales de Aragon, tom. ii. rey 30. c. 3.

established his quarters in the warrior castle of Gibralfaro.

And now came to be considered the disposition of the Moorish prisoners. All those who were strangers in the city, and had either taken refuge there, or had entered to defend it, were at once considered slaves. They were divided into three lots. One was set apart for the service of God, in redeeming captives from bondage, either in the kingdom of Granada, or in Africa; the second lot was divided among those who had aided, either in field or cabinet, in the present siege, according to their rank; the third was appropriated to defray, by their sale, the great expenses incurred in the reduction of the place. A hundred of the Gomeres were sent as presents to Pope Innocent VIII., and were led in triumph through the streets of Rome, and afterwards converted to Christianity. Fifty Moorish maidens were sent to the Queen Joanna of Naples, sister to King Ferdinand, and thirty to the Queen of Portugal. Isabella made presents of others to the ladies of her household, and of the noble families of Spain.

Among the inhabitants of Malaga were four

hundred and fifty Moorish Jews, for the most part women, speaking the Arabic language, and dressed in the Moorish fashion. These were ransomed by a wealthy Jew of Castile, farmer-general of the royal revenues derived from the Jews of Spain. He agreed to make up, within a certain time, the sum of twenty thousand doblas or pistoles of gold; all money and jewels of the captives being taken in payment. They were sent to Castile in two armed galleys.

As to the great mass of Moorish inhabitants, they implored that they might not be scattered and sold into captivity, but might be permitted to ransom themselves by an amount paid within a certain time. Upon this King Ferdinand took the advice of certain of his ablest counsellors. They said to him, if you hold out a prospect of hopeless captivity, the infidels will throw all their gold and jewels into wells and pits, and you will lose the greater part of the spoil; but if you fix a general rate of ransom, and receive their money and jewels in payment, nothing will be destroyed. The king relished greatly this advice; and it was arranged, that all the inhabitants should be ransomed at the

general rate of thirty doblas or pistoles in gold for each individual, male or female, large or small; that all their gold, jewels, and other valuables, should be received immediately, in part payment of the general amount; and that the residue should be paid within eight months; that, if any of the number actually living should die in the interim, their ransom should nevertheless be claimed. If, however, the whole of the amount were not discharged at the expiration of the eight months, they should all be considered and treated as slaves.

The unfortunate Moors were eager to catch at the least hope of future liberty, and consented to these hard conditions. The most rigorous precautions were taken to exact them to the uttermost. The inhabitants were numbered by houses and families, and their names taken down. Their most precious effects were made up into parcels, and sealed and inscribed with their names; and they were ordered to repair with them to certain large corrales or enclosures, adjoining the alcazaba, which were surrounded by high walls, and overlooked by watchtowers; to which places the cavalgadas of Christian captives had usually been driven,

to be confined until the time of sale, like cattle in a market. The Moors were obliged to leave their houses, one by one: all their money, necklaces, bracelets and anklets of gold, pearl, coral, and precious stones, were taken from them at the threshold, and their persons so rigorously searched, that they carried off nothing concealed.

Then might be seen old men, and helpless women, and tender maidens, some of high birth and gentle condition, passing through the streets, heavily burdened, towards the alcazaba. As they left their homes, they smote their breasts, and wrung their hands, and raised their weeping eyes to Heaven in anguish; and this is recorded as their plaint: "Oh, Malaga! city renowned and beautiful! where now is the strength of thy castles? where the grandeur of thy towers? of what avail have been thy mighty walls for the protection of thy children! Behold them driven from thy pleasant abodes, doomed to drag out a life of bondage in a foreign land, and to die far from the home of their infancy! What will become of thy old men and matrons, when their gray hairs shall be no longer reverenced!

what will become of thy maidens, so delicately reared, and tenderly cherished, when reduced to hard and menial servitude! Behold, thy once happy families are scattered asunder, never again to be united! Sons are separated from their fathers, husbands from their wives, and tender children from their mothers. They will bewail each other in foreign lands; but their lamentations will be the scoff of the stranger. Oh, Malaga! city of our birth! who can behold thy desolation, and not shed tears of bitterness *!"

When Malaga was completely secured, a detachment was sent against two fortresses near the sea, called Mexas and Osuna; which had frequently harassed the Christian camp. The inhabitants were threatened with the sword, unless they instantly surrendered. They claimed the same terms that had been granted to Malaga; imagining them to be, freedom of person, and security of property. Their claim was granted. They were transported to Malaga with all their riches; and, on arriving there, were overwhelmed with consternation at find-

* Pulgar.

ing themselves captives. “ Ferdinand,” observes Fray Antonio Agapida, “ was a man of his word: they were shut up in the alcazaba, with the people of Malaga, and shared their fate.”

The unhappy captives remained thus crowded in the court-yards of the alcazaba, like sheep in a fold, until they could be sent by sea and land to Seville. They were then distributed about in city and country, each Christian family having one or more to feed and maintain as a servant, until the term fixed for the payment of the residue of the ransom should expire. The captives had obtained permission, that several of their number should go about among the Moorish towns of the kingdom of Granada, collecting contributions to aid in the purchase of their liberties; but these towns were too much impoverished by the war, and engrossed by their own distresses, to lend a listening ear. So the time expired, without the residue of the ransom being paid; and all the captives of Malaga, to the number, as some say, of eleven, and others, of fifteen thousand, became slaves! “ Never,” exclaims the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, in one of

his usual bursts of zeal and loyalty, "never has there been recorded a more adroit and sagacious arrangement than this made by the catholic monarch, by which he not only secured all the property, and half of the ransom, of these infidels, but finally got possession of their persons into the bargain. This truly may be considered one of the greatest triumphs of the pious and politic Ferdinand, and as raising him above the generality of conquerors, who have merely the valour to gain victories, but lack the prudence and management necessary to turn them to account."

CHAPTER LXVI.

How King Ferdinand prepared to carry the war into a different part of the territories of the Moors.

The western part of the kingdom of Granada had now been conquered by the Christian arms. The seaport of Malaga was captured; the fierce and warlike inhabitants of the Serrania de Ronda, and the other mountain holds of the frontier, were all disarmed, and reduced to peaceful and laborious vassalage. Their haughty fortresses, which had so long overawed the valleys of Andalusia, now displayed the standard of Castile and Arragon; the watchtowers, which crowned every height, and from which the infidels had kept a vulture eye on the Christian territories, were now either dismantled, or garrisoned with catholic troops. "What signalized and sanctified this great triumph," adds the worthy Fray Antonio de Agapida, "were the emblems of ecclesiastical domination which every where

appeared. In every direction arose stately convents and monasteries, those fortresses of the faith, garrisoned by its spiritual soldiery of monks and friars. The sacred melody of Christian bells was again heard among the mountains, calling to early matins, or sounding the angeles at the solemn hour of evening."

While this part of the kingdom was thus reduced by the Christian sword, the central part, round the city of Granada, forming the heart of the Moorish territory, was held in vassalage of the Castilian monarch, by Boabdil, surnamed El Chico.

That unfortunate prince lost no occasion, by acts of homage, and by professions that must have been foreign to his heart, to propitiate the conquerors of his country. No sooner had he heard of the capture of Malaga, than he sent congratulations to the catholic sovereigns, accompanied with presents of horses, richly caparisoned, for the king; and precious cloth of gold, and oriental perfumes, for the queen. His congratulations, and his presents, were received with the utmost graciousness; and the shortsighted prince, lulled by the temporary and politic forbearance of Fer-

dinand, flattered himself, that he was securing the lasting friendship of that monarch.

The policy of Boabdil had its transient and superficial advantages. The portion of Moorish territory under his immediate sway had a respite from the calamities of war. The husbandmen cultivated their luxuriant fields in security, and the vega of Granada once more blossomed like the rose. The merchants again carried on a gainful traffic, and the gates of the city were thronged with beasts of burden, bringing the rich products of every clime. Yet, while the people of Granada rejoiced in their teeming fields and crowded marts, they secretly despised the policy which had procured them these advantages, and held Boabdil for little better than an apostate and an unbeliever.

Muley Abdalla el Zagal was now the hope of the unconquered part of the kingdom; and every Moor, whose spirit was not quite subdued with his fortunes, lauded the valour of the old monarch, and his fidelity to the faith, and wished success to his standard.

El Zagal, though he no longer sat enthroned in the Alhambra, yet reigned over more con-

siderable domains than his nephew. His territories extended from the frontier of Jaen, along the borders of Murcia, to the Mediterranean, and reached into the centre of the kingdom. On the north-east he held the cities of Baza and Guadix, situate in the midst of fertile regions. He had the important seaport of Almeria, also, which at one time rivalled Granada itself in wealth and population. Besides these, his territories included a great part of the Alpuxarra mountains, which extend across the kingdom, and shoot out branches towards the seacoast. This mountainous region was a strong hold of wealth and power. Its stern and rocky height, rising to the clouds, seemed to set invasion at defiance; yet within their rugged embraces were sheltered delightful valleys, of the happiest temperature and richest fertility. The cool springs, and limpid rills, which gushed out in all parts of the mountains, and the abundant streams, which, for a great part of the year, were supplied by the Sierra Nevada, spread a perpetual verdure over the skirts and slopes of the hills, and, collecting in silver rivers in the valleys, wound along among plantations

of mulberry trees, and groves of oranges and citrons, of almonds, figs, and pomegranates. Here was produced the finest silk of Spain, which gave employment to thousands of manufacturers. The sunburnt sides of the hills, also, were covered with vineyards. The abundant herbage of the mountain ravines, and the rich pasturage of the valleys, fed vast flocks and herds; and even the arid and rocky bosoms of the heights teemed with wealth, from the mines of various metals with which they were impregnated. In a word, the Alpuxarra mountains had ever been the great source of revenue to the monarchs of Granada. Their inhabitants, also, were hardy and warlike; and a sudden summons from the Moorish king could at any time call forth fifty thousand fighting men from their rocky fortresses.

Such was the rich, but rugged, fragment of an empire, which remained under the sway of the old warrior monarch, El Zagal. The mountain barriers, by which it was locked up, had protected it from most of the ravages of war, and El Zagal prepared himself, by strengthening every fortress, to battle fiercely for its maintenance.

The catholic sovereigns saw, that fresh troubles and toils awaited them. The war had to be carried into a new quarter, demanding immense expenditures; and new ways and means must be devised, to replenish their exhausted coffers. "As this was a holy war, however," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "and peculiarly redounded to the prosperity of the church, the clergy were full of zeal, and contributed vast sums of money and large bodies of troops. A pious fund was also produced from the first fruits of that glorious institution, the inquisition.

"It so happened, that, about this time, there were many families of wealth and dignity in the kingdoms of Arragon and Valencia, and the principality of Catalonia, whose forefathers had been Jews, but had been converted to Christianity. Notwithstanding the outward piety of these families, it was surmised, and soon came to be strongly suspected, that many of them had a secret hankering after Judaism; and it was even whispered, that some of them practised Jewish rites in private.

"The catholic monarch," continues Agapida, "had a righteous abhorrence of all kinds

of heresy, and a fervent zeal for the faith. He ordered, therefore, a strict investigation of the conduct of these pseudo-Christians. Inquisitors were sent into these provinces for the purpose, who proceeded with their accustomed zeal. The consequence was, that many families were convicted of apostasy from the Christian faith, and of the private practice of Judaism. Some, who had grace and policy sufficient to reform in time, were again received into the Christian fold, after being severely mulcted, and condemned to heavy penance; others were burnt at *auto de fé's*, for the edification of the public; and their property was confiscated for the good of the state.

"As these Hebrews were of great wealth, and had a hereditary passion for jewelry, there was found abundant store in their possession of gold and silver, of rings, and necklaces, and strings of pearl, and coral, and precious stones: treasures easy of transportation, and wonderfully adapted for the emergencies of war. In this way," concludes the pious Agapida, "these backsliders, by the allseeing contrivances of Providence, were made to serve the righteous cause which they had so treacherously de-

serted; and their apostate wealth was sanctified by being devoted to the service of Heaven and the crown, in this holy crusade against the infidels."

It must be added, however, that these pious financial expedients received some check from the interference of Queen Isabella. Her penetrating eyes discovered, that many enormities had been committed under colour of religious zeal, and many innocent persons accused by false witnesses of apostasy, either through malice, or a hope of obtaining their wealth. She caused strict investigation, therefore, into the proceedings which had been held; many of which were reversed, and suborners punished in proportion to their guilt*.

* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 100.

CHAPTER LXVII.

How King Ferdinand invaded the eastern side of the kingdom of Granada; and how he was received by El Zagal.

"Muley Abdalla el Zagal," says the venerable jesuit father, Pedro Abarca, "was the most venomous Mahometan in all Morisma;" and the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida most devoutly echoes his opinion. "Certainly," adds the latter, "none ever opposed a more heathenish and diabolical obstinacy to the holy inroads of the cross and sword."

El Zagal felt, that it was necessary to do something to quicken his popularity with the people; and that nothing was more effectual than a successful inroad. The Moors loved the stirring call to arms, and a wild foray among the mountains; and delighted more in a hasty spoil, wrested with hard fighting from the Christians, than in all the steady and certain gains secured by peaceful traffic.

There reigned at this time a careless se-

curity along the frontier of Jaen. The alcaydes of the Christian fortresses were confident of the friendship of Boabdil el Chico; and they fancied his uncle too distant, and too much engrossed by his own perplexities, to think of molesting them. On a sudden, El Zagal issued out of Guadix with a chosen band, passed rapidly through the mountains which extend behind Granada, and fell, like a thunderbolt, upon the territories in the neighbourhood of Alcala la Real.

Before the alarm could be spread, and the frontier roused, he had made a wide career of destruction through the country; sacking and burning villages, sweeping off flocks and herds, and carrying away captives. The warriors of the frontier assembled; but El Zagal was already far on his return through the mountains; and he re-entered the gates of Guadix in triumph, his army laden with Christian spoil, and conducting an immense cavalgada. Such was one of the fierce El Zagal's preparations for the expected invasion of the Christian king; exciting the warlike spirit of his people, and gaining for himself a transient popularity.

King Ferdinand assembled his army at Murcia in the spring of 1488. He left that city on the fifth of June, with a flying camp of four thousand horse, and fourteen thousand foot. The Marquis of Cadiz led the van, followed by the adelantado of Murcia. The army entered the Moorish frontier by the seacoast, spreading terror through the land; wherever it appeared, the towns surrendered without a blow, so great was the dread of experiencing the woes which had desolated the opposite frontier. In this way, Vera, Velez el Rubico, Velez el Blanco, and many towns of inferior note, to the number of sixty, yielded at the first summons.

It was not until it approached Almeria, that the army met with resistance. This important city was commanded by the Prince Zelim, a relation of El Zagal. He led forth his Moors bravely to the encounter, and skirmished fiercely with the advance guard in the gardens near the city. King Ferdinand came up with the main body of the army, and called off his troops from the skirmish. He saw, that to attack the place with his present force was fruitless: having reconnoitred the city and

its environs, therefore, against a future campaign, he retired with his army and marched towards Baza.

The old warrior, El Zagal, was himself drawn up in the city of Baza, with a powerful garrison. He felt confidence in the strength of the place, and rejoiced when he heard, that the Christian king was approaching.

In the valley in front of Baza there extended a great tract of gardens, like a continued grove, and intersected by canals and water courses. In this he stationed a powerful ambuscade of arquebusiers, and crossbowmen. The vanguard of the Christian army came marching gaily up the valley, with great sound of drum and trumpet, and led on by the Marquis of Cadiz, and the adelantado of Murcia. As they drew near, El Zagal sallied forth, with horse and foot, and attacked them, for a time with great spirit. Gradually falling back, as if pressed by their superior valour, he drew the exulting Christians among the gardens. Suddenly the Moors in ambuscade burst from their concealment, and opened such a terrible fire in flank and rear, that many of the Christians were slain, and the

rest thrown into confusion. King Ferdinand arrived in time to see the disastrous situation of his troops, and gave signal to the vanguard to retire.

El Zagal did not permit the foe to draw off unmolested. Ordering out fresh squadrons, he fell upon the rear of the retreating troops, with loud and triumphant shouts, driving them before him with dreadful havoc. The old war cry of "El Zagal! El Zagal!" was again vociferated by the Moors, and was reëchoed with transport from the walls of the city. The Christians were for a time in imminent peril of a complete rout; when fortunately the adelantado of Murcia threw himself, with a large body of horse and foot, between the pursuers and the pursued, covering the retreat of the latter, and giving them time to rally. The Moors were now attacked so vigorously in turn, that they gave over the unequal contest, and drew back slowly into the city. Many valiant cavaliers were slain in the skirmish; among the number of whom was Don Philip of Arragon, master of the chivalry of Saint George of Montesor. He was illegitimate son of the king's illegitimate brother, Don

Carlos, and his death was greatly bewailed by Ferdinand. He had formerly been archbishop of Palermo; but had doffed the cassock for the cuirass; and had thus, according to Fray Antonio Agapida, gained a glorious crown of martyrdom, by falling in this holy war.

The warm reception of his advance guard, by the old warrior El Zagal, brought King Ferdinand to a pause. He encamped on the banks of the neighbouring river Guadalentin, and began to consider, whether he had acted wisely, in undertaking this campaign with his present force. His late successes had probably rendered him over confident. El Zagal had again schooled him into his characteristic caution. He saw, that the old warrior was too formidably ensconced in Baza, to be dislodged by any thing except a powerful army, and battering artillery; and he feared, that, should he persist in his invasion, some disaster might befall his army, either from the enterprise of the foe, or from a pestilence which prevailed in various parts of the country.

Ferdinand retired therefore from before Baza, as he had on a former occasion from before Laxa, all the wiser for a wholesome

lesson in warfare, but by no means grateful to those who had given it; and with a solemn determination to have his revenge upon his teachers.

He now took measures for the security of the places gained in this campaign, placing in them strong garrisons, well armed and supplied, charging their alcaydes to be vigilant in their posts, and to give no rest to the enemy. The whole of the frontier was placed under the command of the brave Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. As it was evident, from the warlike character of El Zagal, that there would be abundance of active service and hard fighting, many hidalgos and young cavaliers, eager for distinction, remained with Puerto Carrero.

All these dispositions being made, King Ferdinand closed the dubious campaign of this year; not, as usual, by returning in triumph, at the head of his army, to some important city of his dominions; but by disbanding the troops, and repairing to pray at the cross of Caravaca.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

How the Moors made various enterprises against the Christians.

"While the pious King Ferdinand," observes Fray Antonio Agapida, "was humbling himself before the cross, and devoutly praying for the destruction of his enemies, that fierce pagan, El Zagal, depending merely on his arm of flesh, and his sword of steel, pursued his diabolical outrages upon the Christians." No sooner was the invading army disbanded, than El Zagal sallied forth from his strong hold, and carried fire and sword into all those parts that had submitted to the Spanish yoke. The castle of Nixar, being carelessly guarded, was taken by surprise, and its garrison put to the sword. The old warrior raged with sanguinary fury about the whole frontier, attacking convoys, slaying, wounding, and making prisoners, and coming by surprise upon the Christians, wherever they were off their guard.

The alcayde of the fortress of Callar, confiding in the strength of its walls and towers, and on its difficult situation, being built on the summit of a lofty hill, and surrounded by precipices, ventured to absent himself from his post. The vigilant El Zagal was suddenly before it with a powerful force. He stormed the town, sword in hand, fought the Christians from street to street, and drove them, with great slaughter, to the citadel. Here a veteran captain, by the name of Juan de Avalos, a grayheaded warrior, scarred in many a battle, assumed the command, and made an obstinate defence. Neither the multitude of the enemy, the vehemence of their attacks, though led on by the terrible El Zagal himself, had power to shake the fortitude of this doughty old soldier.

The Moors undermined the outer walls, and one of the towers of the fortress, and made their way into the exterior court. The alcayde manned the tops of his towers; pouring down melted pitch, and showering darts, arrows, stones, and all kinds of missiles, upon the assailants. The Moors were driven out of the court; but, being reinforced with fresh troops,

returned repeatedly to the assault. For five days the combat was kept up. The Christians were nearly exhausted; but they were sustained by the cheerings of their stanch old alcayde; and they feared death from the cruel El Zagal, should they surrender. At length, the approach of a powerful force, under Puerto Carrero, relieved them from this fearful peril. El Zagal abandoned the assault; but set fire to the town in his rage and disappointment, and retired to his strong hold of Guadix.

The example of El Zagal roused his adherents to action. Two bold Moorish alcaydes, Ali Altar and Yza Altar, commanding the fortresses of Alhenden and Salobrenna, laid waste the country of the subjects of Boabdil, and the places which had recently submitted to the Christians. They swept off the cattle, carried off captives, and harassed the whole of the newly conquered frontier.

The Moors, also, of Almeria, and Tavernas, and Purchena, made inroads into Murcia, and carried fire and sword into its most fertile regions; while on the opposite frontier, among the wild valleys and rugged recesses of the Sierra Bermeja, or Red Mountains, many of the

Moors, who had lately submitted, again fled to arms. The Marquis of Cadiz suppressed, by timely vigilance, the rebellion of the mountain town of Gausen, situate on a high peak, almost among the clouds; but others of the Moors fortified themselves in rock-built towers and castles, inhabited solely by warriors, whence they carried on a continual war of forage and depredation; sweeping suddenly down into the valleys, and carrying off flocks, and herds, and all kinds of booty, to these eagle nests, to which it was perilous and fruitless to pursue them.

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida closes his story of this chequered year in quite a different strain from those triumphant periods, with which he is accustomed to wind up the victorious campaigns of the sovereigns. "Great and mighty," says this venerable chronicler, "were the floods and tempests, which prevailed throughout the kingdom of Castile and Arragon about this time. It seemed as though the windows of heaven were again opened, and a second deluge overwhelming the face of nature. The clouds burst, as it were, in cataracts upon the earth; torrents rushed

down from the mountains, overflowing the valleys. Brooks were swelled into raging rivers; houses were undermined; mills were swept away by their own streams; the affrighted shepherds saw their flocks drowned in the midst of the pasture, and were fain to take refuge for their lives in towers and high places. The Guadalquivir, for a time, became a roaring and tumultuous sea; inundating the immense plain of the Tablada, and filling the fair city of Seville with affright.

"A vast black cloud moved over the land, accompanied by a hurricane and a trembling of the earth. Houses were unroofed, the walls and battlements of fortresses shaken, and lofty towers rocked to their foundations. Ships, riding at anchor, were either stranded or swallowed up. Others, under sail, were tossed to and fro upon mountain waves, and cast upon the land; where the whirlwind rent them in pieces, and scattered their fragments in the air. Doleful was the ruin, and great the terror, where this baleful cloud passed by; and it left a long track of desolation over sea and land. Some of the faint-hearted," adds Antonio Agapida, "looked upon this tumult of

the elements as a prodigious event, out of the course of nature. In the weakness of their fears, they connected it with those troubles which occurred in various places; considering it a portent of some great calamity, about to be wrought by the violence of the bloody-handed El Zagal and his fierce adherents."

CHAPTER LXIX.

How King Ferdinand prepared to besiege the city of Baza; and how the city prepared for defence.

The stormy winter had passed away, and the spring of 1489 was advancing; yet the heavy rains had broken up the roads; the mountain brooks were swollen to raging torrents; and the late shallow and peaceful rivers were deep, turbulent, and dangerous. The Christian troops had been summoned to assemble, in early spring, on the frontiers of Jaen; but were slow in arriving at the appointed place. They were entangled in the miry defiles of the mountains, or fretted impatiently on the banks of impassable floods. It was late in the month of May before they assembled in sufficient force to attempt the proposed invasion; when, at length, a valiant army, of thirteen thousand horse and forty thousand foot, marched merrily over the border. The queen remained at the city of Jaen,

with the prince royal and the princesses, her children; accompanied and supported by the venerable Cardinal of Spain, and those reverend prelates who assisted in her councils throughout this holy war. The plan of King Ferdinand was to lay siege to the city of Baza, the key of the remaining possessions of the Moor. That important fortress taken, Guadix and Almeria must soon follow; and then the power of El Zagal would be at an end. As the catholic king advanced, he had first to secure various castles and strong holds, in the vicinity of Baza, which might otherwise harass his army. Some of these made obstinate resistance; especially the town of Cuxar. The Christians assailed the walls with various machines, to sap them and batter them down. The brave alcayde, Hubec Adalgar, opposed force to force, and engine to engine. He manned his towers with his bravest warriors, who rained down an iron shower upon the enemy; and he linked caldrons together by strong chains, and cast fire from them, consuming the wooden engines of their assailants, and those who managed them. The siege was protracted for several days.

The bravery of the alcayde could not save his fortress from an overwhelming foe, but it gained him honourable terms. Ferdinand permitted the garrison and the inhabitants to repair with their effects to Baza; and the valiant Hubec Adalgar marched forth with the remnant of his force, and took the way to that devoted city.

The delays, which had been caused to the invading army by these various circumstances, had been diligently improved by the old Moorish El Zagal; who felt, that he was now making his last stand for empire; and that this campaign would decide, whether he should continue a king, or sink into a vassal.

El Zagal was but a few leagues from Baza, at the city of Guadix. This last was the most important point of his remaining territories, being a kind of bulwark between them and the hostile city of Granada, the seat of his nephew's power. Though he heard of the tide of war, therefore, that was collecting, and rolling towards the city of Baza, he dared not go in person to its assistance. He dreaded, that, should he leave Guadix, Boabdil would attack him in rear, while the Christian army was

battling with him in front. El Zagal trusted in the great strength of Baza to defy any violent assaults; and he profited by the delays of the Christian army, to supply it with all possible means of defence. He sent thither all the troops he could spare from his garrison of Guadix, and despatched missives throughout his territories, calling upon all true Moslems to hasten to Baza, to make a devoted stand in defence of their homes, their liberties, and their religion. The cities of Tavernas and Purchena, and the surrounding heights and valleys, responded to his orders, and sent forth their fighting men to the field. The rocky fastnesses of the Alpujarras resounded with the din of arms. Troops of horse and bodies of foot soldiers were seen winding down the rugged cliffs and defiles of those marble mountains, and hastening towards Baza. Many brave cavaliers of Granada, also, spurning the quiet and security of Christian vassalage, secretly left the city, and hastened to join their fighting countrymen. The great dependence of El Zagal, however, was upon the valour and loyalty of his cousin and brother-in-law, Cidi Yahye Alnazar Aben Zelim, who was alcayde

of Almeria; a cavalier experienced in warfare, and redoubtable in the field. He wrote to him, to leave Almeria, and repair, with all speed, at the head of his troops, to Baza. Cidi Yahye departed immediately, with ten thousand of the bravest Moors in the kingdom. These were, for the most part, hardy mountaineers, tempered to sun and storm, and tried in many a combat. None equalled them for a sally or a skirmish. They were adroit in executing a thousand stratagems, ambuscades, and evolutions. Impetuous in their assaults, yet governed in their utmost fury by a word or sign from their commander, at the sound of a trumpet, they would check themselves in the midst of their career, and wheel off and disperse; and, at another sound of a trumpet, they would as suddenly reassemble, and return to the attack. They were upon the enemy when least expected, coming like a rushing blast, spreading havoc and consternation, and then passing away in an instant; so that, when one recovered from the shock, and looked around, behold, nothing was to be seen or heard of this tempest of war, but a cloud of dust, and the clatter of retreating troops!

When Cidi Yahye led his train of ten thousand valiant warriors into the gates of Baza, the city rung with acclamations; and for a time the inhabitants thought themselves secure. El Zagal also felt a glow of confidence, notwithstanding his own absence from the city. "Cidi Yahye," said he, "is my cousin, and my brother-in-law, related to me by blood and marriage: he is a second self: happy is that monarch who has his kinsmen to command his armies!" With all these reinforcements, the garrison of Baza amounted to above twenty thousand men. There were at this time three principal leaders in the city; Mahommed ben Hassan, surnamed the Veteran, who was military governor, or alcayde, an old Moor of great experience and discretion. The second was Hamet Abu Hali, who was captain of the troops stationed in the place; and the third was Hubec Adalgar, the valiant alcayde of Cuxar, who had repaired hither with the remains of his garrison. Over all these Cidi Yahye exercised a supreme command, in consequence of his being of the blood royal, and in the special confidence of Muley Abdalla El Zagal. He was eloquent and ardent in

council, and fond of striking and splendid achievements; but he was a little prone to be carried away by the excitement of the moment, and the warmth of his imagination. The councils of war of these commanders, therefore, were more frequently controlled by the opinions of the old alcayde, Mohammed ben Hassan, for whose shrewdness, caution, and experience, Cidi Yahye himself felt the greatest deference.

The city of Baza was situate in a spacious valley, eight leagues in length and three in breadth, called the Hoya or basin of Baza. It was surrounded by a range of mountains, called the Sierra of Xabalcohol; the streams of which, collecting themselves into two rivers, watered and fertilized the country. The city was built in the plain; but one part of it was protected by the rocky precipices of the mountain, and by a powerful citadel; the other part was defended by massive walls, studded with immense towers. It had suburbs towards the plain, imperfectly fortified by earthen walls. In front of these suburbs extended a tract of orchards and gardens, nearly a league in length, so thickly planted as to resemble a continued forest. Here every citizen, who

could afford it, had his little plantation, and his garden of fruit, and flowers, and vegetables; watered by canals and rivulets, and dominated by a small tower, to serve for recreation or defence. This wilderness of groves and gardens, intersected in all parts by canals and runs of water, and studded by above a thousand small towers, formed a kind of protection to this side of the city; rendering all approach extremely difficult and perplexed, and affording covert to the defenders.

While the Christian army had been detained before the frontier posts, the city of Baza had been a scene of hurried and unremitting preparation. All the grain of the surrounding valley, though yet unripe, was hastily reaped, and borne into the city, to prevent it from yielding sustenance to the enemy. The country was drained of all its supplies. Flocks and herds were driven, bleating and bellowing, into the gates. Long trains of beasts of burden, some laden with food, others with lances, darts, and arms of all kinds, kept pouring into the place. Already there were munitions collected sufficient for a siege of fifteen months; yet still the eager and hasty prepara-

tion was going on, when the army of Ferdinand came in sight. On one side might be seen scattered parties of foot and horse, spurring to the gates; and muleteers, hurrying forward their burdened animals; all anxious to get under shelter before the gathering storm. On the other side, the cloud of war came sweeping down the valley; the roll of drum, or clang of trumpet, resounding occasionally from its deep bosom, or the bright glance of arms flashing forth like vivid lightning from its columns. King Ferdinand pitched his tents in the valley, beyond the green labyrinth of gardens. He sent his heralds to summon the city to surrender, promising the most favourable terms, in case of immediate compliance; and avowing, in the most solemn terms, his resolution, never to abandon the siege, until he had possession of the place.

Upon receiving this summons, the Moorish commanders held a council of war. The prince Cidi Yahye, indignant at the menace of the king, was for retorting by a declaration, that the garrison never would surrender, but would fight until buried under the ruins of the walls. "Of what avail," said the veteran Mohammed,

"is a declaration of the kind, which we may falsify by our deeds? Let us threaten what we know we can perform; and let us endeavour to perform more than we threaten." In conformity to the advice of Mohammed ben Hassan, therefore, a laconic reply was sent to the Christian monarch, thanking him for his offer of favourable terms, but informing him, that they were placed in the city to defend, not to surrender it.

CHAPTER LXX.

The battle of the gardens before Baza.

When the reply of the Moorish commanders was brought to King Ferdinand, he prepared to press the siege with the utmost rigour. Finding the camp too far from the city, and that the intervening orchards afforded shelter for the sallies of the Moors, he determined to advance it beyond the gardens, in the space between them and the suburbs, where his batteries would have full play upon the city walls. A detachment was sent in advance, to take possession of the gardens, and to keep a check upon the suburbs, opposing any sally, while the encampment should be formed and fortified. The various commanders entered the orchards at different points. The young cavaliers marched fearlessly forward, but the experienced veterans foresaw infinite peril in the mazes of this verdant labyrinth. The master of St. Jago, as he led his troops into

the centre of the gardens, exhorted them to keep by one another, and to press forward, in defiance of all difficulty or danger; assuring them, that God would give them the victory, if they attacked hardily and persisted resolutely.

Scarcely had they entered the verge of the orchards, when a din of drums and trumpets, mingled with war cries, were heard from the suburbs, and a legion of Moorish warriors on foot poured forth. They were led on by the Prince Cidi Yahye. He saw the imminent danger of the city, should the Christians gain possession of the orchards. "Soldiers," he cried, "we fight for life and liberty, for our families, our country, our religion*: nothing is left for us to depend upon but the strength of our hands, the courage of our hearts, and the almighty protection of Allah!" The Moors answered him with shouts of war, and rushed to the encounter. The two hosts met in the middle of the gardens. A chance medley combat ensued, with lances, arquebuses, cross-

* "Illi [Mauri] pro fortunis, pro libertate, pro laribus patriciis, pro vitâ denique certabant."—Petri Martyr. Epist. 70.

bows, and cimeters. The perplexed nature of the ground, cut up and intersected by canals and streams, the closeness of the trees, the multiplicity of towers and petty edifices, gave greater advantages to the Moors, who were on foot, than to the Christians, who were on horseback. The Moors, too, knew the ground; all its alleys and passes; and were thus enabled to lurk, to sally forth, to attack and retreat, almost without injury.

The Christian commanders, seeing this, ordered many of the horsemen to dismount, and fight on foot. The battle then became fierce and deadly, each disregarding his own life, provided he could slay his enemy. It was not so much a general battle, as a multitude of petty actions; for every orchard and garden had its distinct contest. No one could see farther than the little scene of fury and bloodshed around him, or knew how the general battle fared. In vain the captains exerted their voices; in vain the trumpets brayed forth signals and commands: all was confounded and unheard in the universal din and uproar; no one kept to his standard, but fought as his own fury or fear dictated.

In some places, the Christians had the advantage; in others, the Moors. Often a victorious party, pursuing the vanquished, came upon a superior and triumphant force of the enemy, and the fugitives turned back upon them in an overwhelming wave. Some broken remnants, in their terror and confusion, fled from their own countrymen, and sought refuge among their enemies, not knowing friend from foe in the obscurity of the groves. The Moors were more adroit in these wild skirmishings, from their flexibility, lightness, and agility, and the rapidity with which they would disperse, rally, and return again to the charge*.

The hardest fighting was about the small garden towers and pavilions, which served as so many petty fortresses. Each party by turns gained them, defended them fiercely, and were driven out. Many of the towers were set on fire, and increased the horrors of the fight, by the wreaths of smoke and flame in which they wrapped the groves, and by the shrieks of those who were burning.

* Mariana, lib. xxv. cap. 13.

Several of the Christian cavaliers, bewildered by the uproar and confusion, and shocked at the carnage which prevailed, would have led their men out of the action; but they were entangled in a labyrinth, and knew not which way to retreat. While in this perplexity, the standardbearer of one of the squadrons of the grand cardinal had his arm carried off by a cannon ball; the standard was well nigh falling into the hands of the enemy, when Rodrigo de Mendoza, an intrepid youth, natural son of the grand cardinal, rushed to its rescue, through a shower of balls, lances, and arrows; and, bearing it aloft, dashed forward with it into the hottest of the combat, followed by his shouting soldiers. King Ferdinand, who remained in the skirts of the orchard, was in extreme anxiety. It was impossible to see much of the action, for the multiplicity of trees, and towers, and wreaths of smoke; and those who were driven out defeated, or came out wounded and exhausted, gave different accounts, according to the fate of the partial conflicts in which they had been engaged. Ferdinand exerted himself to the utmost, to animate and encourage his troops to this blind

encounter, sending reinforcements of horse and foot to those points where the battle was more sanguinary and doubtful. Among those that were brought forth mortally wounded was Don Juan de Lara, a youth of uncommon merit, greatly prized by the king, beloved by the army, and recently married to Donna Catalina de Urrea, a young lady of distinguished beauty*. They laid him at the foot of a tree, and endeavoured to stanch and bind up his wounds with a scarf which his bride had wrought for him: but his life blood flowed too profusely; and while a holy friar was yet administering to him the last sacred offices of the church, he expired, almost at the feet of his sovereign.

On the other hand, the veteran alcayde, Mohammed ben Hassan, surrounded by a little band of chieftains, kept an anxious eye upon the scene of combat, from the walls of the city. For nearly twelve hours the battle had raged without intermission. The thickness of the foliage hid all the particulars from their sight; but they could see the flash of swords,

* Mariana. P. Martyr. Zurita.

and glance of helmets, among the trees. Columns of smoke rose in every direction, while the clash of arms, the thundering of ribadoquines and arquebuses, the shouts and cries of the combatants, and the groans and supplications of the wounded, bespoke the deadly conflict, that was waging in the bosom of the groves. They were harassed too by the shrieks and lamentations of the Moorish women and children, as their wounded relatives were brought bleeding from the scene of action, and were stunned by a general outcry of wo, on the part of the combatants, as the body of Redoun Zalfarga, a renegade Christian, and one of the bravest of their generals, was borne breathless into the city.

At length the din of battle approached nearer to the skirts of the orchards. They beheld their warriors driven out from among the groves, by fresh squadrons of the enemy; and, after disputing the ground inch by inch, obliged to retire to a place between the orchards and the suburbs, which was fortified with palisadoes.

The Christians immediately planted opposing palisadoes, and established strong out-

posts near to the retreat of the Moors; while, at the same time, King Ferdinand ordered that his encampment should be pitched within the hard won orchards.

Mohammed ben Hassan sallied forth to the aid of the Prince Cidi Yahye, and made a desperate attempt to dislodge the enemy from this formidable position; but the night had closed, and the darkness rendered it impossible to make any impression. The Moors, however, kept up constant assaults and alarms, throughout the night, and the weary Christians, exhausted by the toils and sufferings of the day, were not allowed a moment of repose*.

* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 106, 107. Cura de los Palacios, cap. 92. Zurita, lib. xx. cap. 81.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Siege of Baza. Embarrassment of the army.

The morning sun rose upon a piteous scene before the walls of Baza. The Christian outposts, harassed throughout the night, were pale and haggard; while the multitude of slain, which lay before their palisadoes, showed the fierce attacks they had sustained, and the bravery of their defence.

Beyond them lay the groves and gardens of Baza; once the favourite resorts for recreation and delight, now a scene of horror and desolation. The towers and pavilions were smoking ruins; the canals and watercourses were discoloured with blood, and choked with the bodies of the slain. Here and there the ground, deep dinted with the tramp of man and steed, and plashed and slippery with gore, showed where there had been some fierce and mortal conflict; while the bodies of Moors and Christians, ghastly in death, lay half con-

cealed among the matted and trampled shrubs, and flowers, and herbage.

Amidst the sanguinary scenes arose the Christian tents, which had been hastily pitched among the gardens in the preceding evening. The experience of the night, however, and the forlorn aspect of every thing in the morning, convinced King Ferdinand of the perils and hardships to which his camp must be exposed, in its present situation; and, after a consultation with his principal cavaliers, he resolved to abandon the orchards.

It was a dangerous movement to extricate his army from so entangled a situation, in the face of so alert and daring an enemy. A bold front was therefore kept up towards the city. Additional troops were ordered to the advanced posts, and works begun, as if for a settled encampment. Not a tent was struck in the gardens; but in the mean time the most active and unremitting exertions were made to remove back all the baggage and furniture of the camp to the original station.

All day the Moors beheld a formidable show of war maintained in front of the gardens; while in the rear, the tops of the Chris-

tian tents, and the pennons of the different commanders, were seen rising above the groves. Suddenly, towards evening, the tents sunk and disappeared; the outposts broke up their stations, and withdrew; and the whole shadow of an encampment was fast vanishing from their eyes.

The Moor saw, too late, the subtile manœuvre of King Ferdinand. Cidi Yahye again sallied forth, with a large force of horse and foot, and pressed furiously upon the Christians. The latter, however, experienced in Moorish attack, retired in close order: sometimes turning upon the enemy, and driving them to their barricadoes, and then pursuing their retreat. In this way the army was extricated, without much further loss, from the perilous labyrinth of the gardens. The camp was now out of danger, but it was, also, too distant from the city to do mischief; while the Moors could sally forth, and return, without hinderance. The king called a council of war, to consider in what manner to proceed. The Marquis of Cadiz was for abandoning the siege for the present; the place being too strong, too well garrisoned and provided, and too extensive, to be either carried by assault, and reduced by

famine, or invested by their limited forces: while, in lingering before it, the army would be exposed to the usual maladies and sufferings of besieging enemies; and, when the rainy season came on, would be shut up by the swelling of the two rivers. He recommended instead, that the king should throw garrisons of horse and foot into all the towns captured in the neighbourhood; and leave them to keep up a predatory war upon Baza, while he should overrun and ravage all the country; so that, in the following year, Almeria and Guadix, having all their subject towns and territories taken from them, might be starved into submission.

Don Gutiere de Carnedas, senior commander of Lara, on the other hand, maintained, that to abandon the siege would be construed by the enemy into a sign of weakness and irresolution. It would give new spirits to the partisans of El Zagal; and would gain to his standard many of the wavering subjects of Boabdil, if it did not encourage the fickle populace of Granada to open rebellion. He advised, therefore, that the siege should be prosecuted with vigour.

The pride of Ferdinand pleaded in favour

of the last opinion: for it would be doubly humiliating again to return from a campaign in this part of the Moorish kingdom, without striking a blow. But when he reflected on all that his army had suffered, and on all that they must still suffer, should the siege continue; especially from the difficulty of obtaining a regular supply of provisions for so numerous a host, across a great extent of rugged and mountainous country, he determined to consult the safety of his people, and to adopt the advice of the Marquis of Cadiz.

When the soldiery heard, that the king was about to raise the siege, in mere consideration for their sufferings, they were filled with generous enthusiasm; and entreated, as with one voice, that the siege might never be abandoned until the city surrendered.

Perplexed by conflicting councils, the king despatched messengers to the queen, at Jaen, requesting her advice. Posts had been stationed between them in such manner, that missives from the camp could reach the queen within ten hours. Isabella sent instantly her reply. She left the policy of raising, or continuing, the siege, to the decision of the king

and his captains; but, should they determine to persevere, she pledged herself, with the aid of God, to forward them men, money, provisions, and all other supplies, until the city should be taken.

The reply of the queen determined Ferdinand to persevere; and when his determination was made known to the army, it was hailed with as much joy as if it had been tidings of a victory.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Siege of Baza continued. How King Ferdinand completely invested the city.

The Moorish prince, Cidi Yahye, had received intelligence of the doubts and discussions in the Christian camp, and flattered himself with hopes, that the besieging army would soon retire in despair; though the veteran alcayde, Mohammed, shook his head with incredulity at the suggestion. A sudden movement next morning in the Christian camp seemed to confirm the sanguine hopes of the prince. The tents were struck, the artillery and baggage were conveyed away, and bodies of soldiers began to march along the valley. The momentary gleam of triumph was soon dispelled. The catholic king had merely divided his host into two camps, the more effectually to distress the city. One, consisting of four thousand horse, and eight thousand foot, with all the artillery and battering en-

gines, took post on the side of the city towards the mountain. This was commanded by the valiant Marquis of Cadiz, with whom were Don Alonzo de Aguilar, Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, and many other distinguished cavaliers.

The other camp was commanded by the king; having six thousand horse, and a great host of foot soldiers, the hardy mountaineers of Biscay, Guipuscoa, Gallicia, and the Asturias. Among the cavaliers who were with the king, were the brave Count de Tendilla, Don Rodrigo de Mendoza, and Don Alonzo de Cardenas, master of Santiago. The two camps were wide asunder, on opposite sides of the city; and between them lay the thick wilderness of orchards. Both camps were therefore fortified by great trenches, breastworks, and palisadoes. The veteran Mohammed, as he saw these two formidable camps, glittering on each side of the city, and noted the well known pennons of renowned commanders fluttering above them, still comforted his companions. "These camps," said he, "are too far removed from each other for mutual succour and co-operation; and the

forest of orchards is as a gulf between them."
This consolation was but of short continuance. Scarcely were the Christian camps fortified, when the ears of the Moorish garrison were startled by the sound of innumerable axes, and the crash of falling trees. They looked with anxiety from their highest towers; and, behold, their favourite groves were sinking beneath the blows of the Christian pioneers! The Moors sallied forth with fiery zeal to protect their beloved gardens, and the orchards in which they so much delighted. The Christians, however, were too well supported to be driven from their work. Day after day, the gardens became the scene of incessant and bloody skirmishings. Still the devastation of the groves went on; for King Ferdinand was too well aware of the necessity of clearing away this skreen of woods, not to bend all his forces to the undertaking. It was a work, however, of gigantic toil and patience. The trees were of such magnitude, and so closely set together, and spread over so wide an extent, that, notwithstanding four thousand men were employed, they could scarcely clear a strip of land ten paces broad, within a day: and such were the interruptions,

from the incessant assaults of the Moors, that it was full forty days before the orchards were completely levelled.

The devoted city of Baza now lay stripped of its beautiful covering of groves and gardens, at once its ornament, its delight, and its protection. The besiegers went on slowly and surely, with almost incredible labours, to invest and isolate the city. They connected their camps by a deep trench across the plain, a league in length, into which they diverted the waters of the mountain streams. They protected this trench by palisadoes, fortified by fifteen castles, at regular distances. They dug a deep trench also, two leagues in length, across the mountain, in the rear of the city, reaching from camp to camp, and fortified it on each side with walls of earth and stone, and wood. Thus the Moors were enclosed on all sides by trenches, palisadoes, walls, and castles; so that it was impossible for them to sally beyond this great line of circumvallation, nor could any force enter to their succour. Ferdinand made an attempt likewise to cut off the supply of water from the city: "for water," observes the worthy Agapida, "is more neces-

sary to these infidels than bread; as they make use of it in repeated daily ablutions, enjoined by their damnable religion, and employ it in baths, and in a thousand other idle and extravagant modes, of which we Spaniards and Christians make but little account."

There was a noble fountain of pure water, which gushed out at the foot of the hill Albohacin, just behind the city. The Moors had almost a superstitious fondness for this fountain, and daily depended upon it for their supplies. Receiving intimation from some deserters of the plan of King Ferdinand to get possession of this precious fountain, they sallied forth at night, and threw up such powerful works upon the impending hill, as to set all attempts of the Christian assailants at defiance.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Exploit of Hernando Perez del Pulgar, and other cavaliers.

The siege of Baza, while it displayed the skill and science of the Christian commanders, gave but little scope for the adventurous spirit and fiery valour of the young Spanish cavaliers. They repined at the tedious monotony and dull security of their fortified camp; and longed for some soul-stirring exploit of difficulty and danger. Two of the most spirited of these youthful cavaliers were Francisco de Bazan, and Antonio de Cueva, the latter of whom was son to the Duke of Albuquerque. As they were one day seated on the ramparts of the camp, and venting their impatience at this life of inaction, they were overheard by a veteran adalid, one of those scouts, or guides, who are acquainted with all parts of the country. "Señores," said he, "if you wish for a service of peril and profit; if you are willing to pluck

the fiery old Moor by the beard; I can lead you to where you may put your mettle to the proof. Hard by the city of Guadix are certain hamlets, rich in booty: I can conduct you by a way in which you may come upon them by surprise; and, if you are as cool in the head as you are hot in the spur, you may bear off your spoils from under the very eyes of old El Zagal." The idea of thus making booty at the very gates of Guadix pleased the hot spirited youths. These predatory excursions were frequent about this time; and the Moors of Padul, Alhenden, and other towns of the Alpuxarras, had recently harassed the Christian territories by expeditions of the kind. Francisco de Bazan and Antonio de Cueva soon found other young cavaliers of their age ready to join them in the adventure; and, in a little while, they had nearly three hundred horse and two hundred foot, ready equipped, and eager for the foray.

Keeping their destination secret, they sallied out of the camp, on the edge of an evening, and, guided by the adalid, made their way by starlight through the most secret roads of the mountains. In this way they pressed on

rapidly day and night, until, early one morning before cock crowing, they fell suddenly upon the hamlets, made prisoners of the inhabitants, sacked the houses, ravaged the fields, and, sweeping through the meadows, gathered together all the flocks and herds. Without giving themselves time to rest, they set out upon their return, making with all speed for the mountains, before the alarm should be given, and the country roused.

Several of the herdsmen, however, had fled to Guadix, and carried tidings of the ravage to El Zagal. The beard of old Muley trembled with rage. He immediately sent out six hundred of his choicest horse and foot, with orders to recover the booty, and to bring those insolent marauders captive to Guadix.

The Christian cavaliers were urging their cavalgada of cattle and sheep up a mountain as fast as their own weariness would permit; when, looking back, they beheld a great cloud of dust, and presently descried the turbaned host hot upon their traces.

They saw, that the Moors were superior in number; they were fresh also, both man and steed: whereas both they and their horses

were fatigued by two days and two nights of hard marching. Several of the horsemen, therefore, gathered round the commanders, and proposed, that they should relinquish their spoil, and save themselves by flight. The captains Francisco de Bazan, and Antonio de Cueva, spurned at such craven counsel. "What!" cried they, "abandon our prey without striking a blow! Leave our foot soldiers too in the lurch, to be overwhelmed by the enemy? If any one gives such counsel through fear, he mistakes the course of safety; for there is less danger in presenting a bold front to the foe, than in turning a dastard back; and fewer men are killed in a brave advance, than in a cowardly retreat."

Some of the cavaliers were touched by these words, and declared, that they would stand by the foot soldiers, like true companions in arms. The great mass of the party, however, were volunteers, brought together by chance, who received no pay, nor had any common tie, to keep them together in time of danger. The pleasure of the expedition being over, each thought but of his own safety, regardless of his companions. As the enemy approached, the tumult of opinions increased; and every

thing was confusion. The captains, to put an end to the dispute, ordered the standard-bearer to advance against the Moors; well knowing, that no true cavalier would hesitate to follow and defend his banner. The standard-bearer hesitated; the troops were on the point of taking to flight. Upon this, a cavalier of the royal guards, named Hernando Perez del Pulgar, alcayde of the fortress of Salar, rode to the front. He took off a handkerchief which he wore round his head, after the Andalusian fashion, and tying it to the end of his lance, elevated it in the air. "Cavaliers," cried he, "why do you take weapons in your hands, if you depend upon your feet for safety? This day will determine who is the brave man, and who the coward. He who is disposed to fight shall not want a standard; let him follow this handkerchief!" So saying, he waved his banner, and spurred bravely against the Moors. His example shamed some, and filled others with generous emulation. All turned with one accord, and, following the valiant Pulgar, rushed with shouts upon the enemy.

The Moors scarcely waited to receive the shock of their encounter. Seized with a sudden panic, they took to flight, and were pursued

for a great distance, with great slaughter. Three hundred of their dead strewed the road, and were stripped and despoiled by the conquerors; many were taken prisoners; and the Christian cavaliers returned in triumph to the camp, with a long cavalcade of sheep and cattle, and mules laden with booty, and bearing before them the singular standard, which had conducted them to victory.

When King Ferdinand was informed of the gallant action of Hernando Perez del Pulgar, he immediately conferred on him the honour of knighthood; and ordered, that, in memory of his achievements, he should bear for arms a lance with a handkerchief, together with a castle, and twelve lions. This is but one of many hardy and heroic deeds, done by that brave cavalier, in the wars against the Moors; by which he gained great renown, and the distinguished appellation of "El de las hazañas," or, "he of the exploits*."

* Hernando del Pulgar, the historian, secretary to Queen Isabella, is confounded with this cavalier by some writers. He was also present at the siege of Baza, and recounted this transaction in his Chronicle of the catholic sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Continuation of the siege of Baza.

The old Moorish king El Zagal mounted a tower, and looked out eagerly, to enjoy the sight of the Christian marauders, brought captive into the gates of Baza; but his spirits fell, when he beheld his own troops stealing back in the dusk of the evening, in broken, dejected parties.

The fortune of war bore hard against the old monarch. His mind was harassed by the disastrous tidings brought each day from Baza, of the sufferings of the inhabitants, and the numbers of the garrison slain in the frequent skirmishes. He dared not go in person to the relief of the place; for his presence was necessary in Guadix, to keep a check upon his nephew in Granada. He made efforts to send reinforcements and supplies; but they were intercepted, and either captured or driven back. Still his situation was, in some respects,

preferable to that of his nephew Boabdil. The old monarch was battling like a warrior on the last step of his throne. El Chiquito remained, a kind of pensioned vassal, in the luxurious abode of the Alhambra. The chivalrous part of the inhabitants of Granada could not but compare the generous stand made by the warriors of Baza, for their country and their faith, with their own timeserving submission to the yoke of an unbeliever. Every account they received of the wars of Baza wrung their hearts with agony; every account of the exploits of its devoted defenders brought blushes to their cheeks. Many stole forth secretly with their weapons, and hastened to join the besieged; and the partisans of El Zagal wrought upon the patriotism and passions of the remainder, until another of those conspiracies was formed, that were continually menacing the unsteady throne of Granada. It was concerted by the conspirators, to assail the Alhambra on a sudden; to slay Boabdil; to assemble all the troops, and march to Guadix; where, being reinforced by the garrison of that place, and led on by the old warrior monarch, they might fall, with over-

whelming power, upon the Christian army before Baza.

Fortunately for Boabdil, he discovered the conspiracy in time, and had the heads of the leaders struck off, and placed upon the walls of the Alhambra: an act of severity, unusual with this mild and wavering monarch, which struck terror into the disaffected, and produced a kind of mute tranquillity throughout the city.

King Ferdinand had full information of all these movements and measures for the relief of Baza, and took timely precautions to prevent them. Bodies of horsemen held watch in the mountain passes, to prevent all supplies, and to intercept any generous volunteers from Granada; and watchtowers were erected, or scouts placed, on any commanding height, to give the alarm, at the least sign of a hostile turban.

The Prince Cidi Yahye and his brave companions in arms were thus gradually walled up, as it were, from the rest of the world. A line of towers, the battlements of which bristled with troops, girdled their city; and behind the intervening bulwarks and pa-

lisadoes passed and repassed continual bodies of troops. Week after week, and month after month, glided away; but Ferdinand waited in vain for the garrison to be either terrified or starved into surrender. Every day they sallied forth with the spirit and alacrity of troops high fed, and flushed with confidence. "The Christian monarch," said the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan, "builds his hopes upon our growing faint and desponding: we must manifest unusual cheerfulness and vigour. What would be rashness in other service, becomes prudence with us." The Prince Cidi Yahye agreed with him in opinion; and sallied forth, with his troops, upon all kinds of harebrained exploits. They laid ambushes, concerted surprises, and made the most desperate assaults. The great extent of the Christian works rendered them weak in many parts. Against these the Moors directed their attacks; suddenly breaking into them, making a hasty ravage, and bearing off their booty, in triumph, to the city. Sometimes they would sally forth, by the passes and clefts of the mountain in the rear of the city, which it was difficult to guard; and, hurrying down into

the plain, would sweep off all cattle and sheep that were grazing near the suburbs, and all stragglers from the camp.

These partisan sallies brought on many sharp and bloody encounters; in some of which, Don Alonzo de Aguilar and the alcayde de los Donzeles distinguished themselves greatly. During one of these hot skirmishes, which happened on the skirts of the mountain about twilight, a valiant cavalier, named Martin Galindo, beheld a powerful Moor dealing deadly blows about him, and making great havoc among the Christians. Galindo pressed forward, and challenged him to single combat. The Moor, who was of the valiant tribe of the Abencerrages, was not slow in answering the call. Couching their lances, they rushed furiously upon each other. At the first shock, the Moor was wounded in the face, and borne out of his saddle. Before Galindo could check his steed, and turn from his career, the Moor sprang upon his feet, recovered his lance, and, rushing upon him, wounded him in the head and the arm. Though Galindo was on horseback, and the Moor on foot, yet such was the prowess and

address of the latter, that the Christian knight, being disabled in the arm, was in the utmost peril, when his comrades hastened to his assistance. At their approach, the valiant pagan retreated slowly up the rocks, keeping them at bay, until he found himself among his companions.

Several of the young Spanish cavaliers, stung by the triumph of this Moslem knight, would have challenged others of the Moors to single combat; but King Ferdinand prohibited all vaunting encounters of the kind. He forbade his troops, also, to provoke skirmishes; well knowing, that the Moors were more dexterous than most people in this irregular mode of fighting, and were better acquainted with the ground.

CHAPTER LXXV.

How two friars arrived at the camp; and how they came from the Holy Land.

"While the holy Christian army," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "was thus beleaguering this infidel city of Baza, there rode into the camp, one day, two reverend friars of the order of Saint Francis. One was of portly person, and authoritative air. He bestrode a goodly steed, well conditioned, and well caparisoned; while his companion rode behind him, upon a humble hack, poorly accoutred; and, as he rode, he scarcely raised his eyes from the ground, but maintained a meek and lowly air.

The arrival of two friars in the camp was not a matter of much note; for, in these holy wars, the church militant continually mingled in the affray, and helmet and cowl were always seen together; but it was soon discovered, that these worthy saints errant were from a

far country, and on a mission of great import. They were, in truth, just arrived from the Holy Land; being two of the saintly men, who kept vigil over the sepulchre of our blessed Lord at Jerusalem. He, of the tall and portly form, and commanding presence, was Fray Antonio Millan, prior of the Franciscan convent in the Holy City. He had a full and florid countenance, a sonorous voice, and was round, and swelling, and copious, in his periods, like one accustomed to harangue, and to be listened to, with deference. His companion was small and spare in form, pale of visage, and soft, and silken, and almost whispering, in speech. "He had a humble and lowly way," says Agapida; "evermore bowing the head, as became one of his calling. Yet he was one of the most active, zealous, and effective brothers of the convent; and, when he raised his small black eye from the earth, there was a keen glance out of the corner, which showed, that, though harmless as a dove, he was, nevertheless, as wise as a serpent."

These holy men had come, on a momentous embassy, from the Grand Soldan of Egypt;

or, as Agapida terms him, in the language of the day, the Soldan of Babylon. The league, which had been made between that potentate and his arch foe, the Grand Turk, Bajazet II., to unite in arms for the salvation of Granada, as has been mentioned in a previous chapter of this chronicle, had come to nought. The infidel princes had again taken up arms against each other, and had relapsed into their ancient hostility. Still the Grand Soldan, as head of the whole Moslem sect, considered himself bound to preserve the kingdom of Granada from the grasp of unbelievers. He despatched, therefore, these two holy friars, with letters to the Castilian sovereigns, as well as to the pope, and to the King of Naples; remonstrating against the evils done to the Moors of the kingdom of Granada, who were of his faith and kindred: whereas, it was well known, that great numbers of Christians were indulged and protected in the full enjoyment of their property, their liberty, and their faith, in his dominions. He insisted, therefore, that this war should cease; that the Moors of Granada should be reinstated in the territory of which they had been dispossessed: otherwise, he

threatened to put to death all the Christians beneath his sway, to demolish their convents and temples, and to destroy the Holy Sepulchre.

This fearful menace had spread consternation among the Christians of Palestine; and when the intrepid Fray Antonio Millan and his lowly companion departed on their mission, they were accompanied far from the gates of Jerusalem by an anxious throng of brethren and disciples, who remained watching them with tearful eyes, as they journeyed over the plains of Judea.

These holy ambassadors were received with great distinction by King Ferdinand; for men of their cloth had ever high honour and consideration in his court. He had long and frequent conversations with them, about the Holy Land; the state of the Christian church in the dominions of the Grand Soldan, and of the policy and conduct of that arch infidel towards it. The portly prior of the Franciscan convent was full, and round, and oratorical in his replies, and the king expressed himself much pleased with the eloquence of his periods: but the politic monarch was observed to lend a close and attentive ear to the whispering

voice of the lowly companion; "whose discourse," adds Agapida, "though modest and low, was clear and fluent, and full of subtle wisdom."

These holy friars had visited Rome in their journeying, where they had delivered the letter of the Soldan to the sovereign pontiff. His holiness had written by them to the Castilian sovereigns, requesting to know what reply they had to offer to this demand of the oriental potentate.

The King of Naples also wrote to them on the subject, but in wary terms. He inquired into the course of this war with the Moors of Granada, and expressed great marvel at its events; "as if," says Agapida, "both were not notorious throughout all the Christian world. Nay," adds the worthy friar, with becoming indignation, "he uttered opinions savouring of little better than damnable heresy; for he observed, that although the Moors were of a different sect, they ought not to be maltreated without just cause; and hinted, that, if the Castilian sovereigns did not suffer any crying injury from the Moors, it would be improper to do any thing which might draw great damage

upon the Christians: as if, when once the sword of the faith was drawn, it ought ever to be sheathed, until this scum of heathendom were utterly destroyed, or driven from the land. But this monarch," he continues, "was more kindly disposed towards the infidels, than was honest and lawful in a Christian prince, and was at that very time in league with the Soldan, against their common enemy, the Grand Turk."

These pious sentiments of the truly catholic Agapida are echoed by Padre Mariana, in his history*; but the worthy chronicler, Pedro Abarca, attributes the interference of the King of Naples, not to lack of orthodoxy in religion, but to an excess of worldly policy; he being apprehensive, that, should Ferdinand conquer the Moors of Granada, he might have time and means to assert a claim of the house of Arragon to the crown of Naples.

"King Ferdinand," continues the worthy father Pedro Abarca, "was no less master of dissimulation than his cousin of Naples; so he replied to him with the utmost suavity of

* Mariana, lib. xxv. cap. 15.

manner; going into a minute and patient vindication of the war, and taking great apparent pains to inform him of those things, which all the world knew, but of which the other pretended to be ignorant *. At the same time, he soothed his solicitude about the fate of the Christians in the empire of the Grand Soldan; assuring him, that the great revenue extorted from them in rents and tributes, would be a certain protection against the threatened violence.

To the pope, he made the usual vindication of the war; that it was for the recovery of ancient territory usurped by the Moors, for the punishment of wars and violences inflicted upon the Christians; and, finally, that it was a holy crusade, for the glory and advancement of the church.

"It was a truly edifying sight," says Agapida, "to behold these friars, after they had had their audience of the king, moving about the camp, always surrounded by nobles and cavaliers of high and martial renown. These were insatiable in their questions about the

* Abarca, Anales de Aragon, rey. xxx. cap. 3.

Holy Land, the state of the sepulchre of our Lord, and the sufferings of the devoted brethren who guarded it, and the pious pilgrims who resorted there to pay their vows. The portly prior of the convent would stand, with lofty and shining countenance, in the midst of these iron warriors, and declaim with resounding eloquence on the history of the sepulchre; but the humble brother would ever and anon sigh deeply, and, in low tones, utter some tale of suffering and outrage, at which his steel clad hearers would grasp the hilts of their swords, and mutter between their clenched teeth prayers for another crusade."

The pious friars, having finished their mission to the king, and been treated with all due distinction, took their leave, and wended their way to Jaen, to visit the most catholic of queens. Isabella, whose heart was the seat of piety, received them as sacred men, invested with more than human dignity. During their residence at Jaen, they were continually in the royal presence; the respectable prior of the convent moved and melted the ladies of the court by his florid rhetoric; but his lowly companion was observed to have continual

access to the royal ear. "That saintly and soft spoken messenger," says Agapida, "received the reward of his humility; for the queen, moved by his frequent representations, made in all modesty and lowliness of spirit, granted a yearly sum in perpetuity of one thousand ducats in gold for the support of the monks of the convents of the Holy Sepulchre *."

Moreover, on the departure of these holy ambassadors, the excellent and most catholic queen delivered to them a veil devoutly embroidered with her own royal hands, to be placed over the Holy Sepulchre. A precious and inestimable present, which called forth a most eloquent tribute of thanks from the portly prior, but which brought tears into the eyes of his lowly companion †.

* La Reyna dió á los frailes mil ducados de renta corda año, para el sustento de los religiosos del Santo Sepulcro, que es la mejor himosna y sustento que hasta nuestros dias haquedado á estos religiosos de Jerusalem: para donde les dió la reyna un velo labrado por sus manos, para poner encima de la santa sepultura del Señor. Garibay, Comp. Hist. lib. xviii. cap. 36.

† It is proper to mention the result of this mission of the two friars; and which the worthy Agapida has neglected to record. At a subsequent period, the catholic sovereigns sent the distinguished historian Pietro Martyr of Angleria, as ambassador to the Grand Soldan. That able

man made such representations as were perfectly satisfactory to the oriental potentate. He also obtained from him the remission of many exactions and extortions heretofore practised upon Christian pilgrims, visiting the Holy Sepulchre, which, it is presumed, had been gently, but cogently, detailed to the monarch by the lowly friar. Pietro Martyr wrote an account of his embassy to the Grand Soldan; a work greatly esteemed by the learned, and containing much curious information. Is is entitled "De Legatione Babilonicâ."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

How Queen Isabella devised means to supply the army with provisions.

It has been the custom to laud the conduct and address of King Ferdinand in this most arduous and protracted war; but the sage Agapida is more disposed to give credit to the councils and measures of the queen, who, he observes, though less ostensible in action, was in truth the very soul, the vital principle, of this great enterprise. While King Ferdinand was bustling in his camp, and making a glittering display with his gallant chivalry; she, surrounded by her saintly counsellors, in the episcopal palace of Jaen, was devising ways and means to keep the king and his army in existence. She had pledged herself to provide a supply of men, and money, and provisions, until the city should be taken. The hardships of the siege caused a fearful waste of life; but the supply of men was the least difficult part

of her undertaking. So beloved was the queen by the chivalry of Spain, that, on her calling on them for assistance, not a grandee or cavalier, that yet lingered at home, but either repaired in person or sent forces to the camp; the ancient and warlike families vied with each other, in marshalling forth their vassals; and thus the besieged Moors beheld each day fresh troops arriving before their city, and new ensigns and pennons displayed, emblazoned with arms well known to the veteran warriors.

But the most arduous task was to keep up a regular supply of provisions. It was not the army alone that had to be supported, but also the captured towns and their garrisons; for the whole country around them had been ravaged, and the conquerors were in danger of starving in the midst of the land they had desolated. To transport what was daily required for such immense numbers was a gigantic undertaking, in a country where there was neither water conveyance, nor roads for carriages. Every thing had to be borne by beasts of burden, over rugged and broken paths of the mountains, and through dangerous defiles, exposed to the attacks and plunderings of the Moors.

The wary and calculating merchants, accustomed to supply the army, shrunk from engaging, at their own risk, in so hazardous an undertaking. The queen therefore hired fourteen thousand beasts of burden, and ordered all the wheat and barley to be bought up in Andalusia, and in the domains of the knights of Santiago and Calatrava. She distributed the administration of these supplies among able and confidential persons. Some were employed to collect the grain, others to take it to the mills, others to superintend the grinding and delivery, and others to convey it to the camp. To every two hundred animals a muleteer was allotted, to take charge of them on the route. Thus great lines of convoys were in constant movement, traversing the mountains to and fro, guarded by large bodies of troops, to defend them from hovering parties of the Moors. Not a single day's intermission was allowed; for the army depended upon the constant arrival of these supplies for daily food. The grain, when brought into the camp, was deposited in an immense granary, and sold to the army at a fixed price, which was never either raised or lowered.

Incredible were the expenses incurred in

this business; but the queen had ghostly advisers, thoroughly versed in the art of getting at the resources of the country. Many worthy prelates opened the deep purses of the church, and furnished loans from the revenues of their dioceses and convents; and their pious contributions were eventually rewarded by Providence a hundred fold. Merchants and other wealthy individuals, confident of the punctual faith of the queen, advanced large sums on the security of her word: many noble families lent their plate without waiting to be asked. The queen, also, sold certain annual rents in inheritance, at great sacrifices, assigning the revenues of towns and cities for the payment. Finding all this insufficient to satisfy the enormous expenditure, she sent her gold and plate, and all her jewels, to the cities of Valencia and Barcelona, where they were pledged for a great amount of money; which was immediately appropriated to keep up the supplies of the army.

Thus, through the wonderful activity, judgment, and enterprise of this heroic and magnanimous woman, a great host, encamped in the heart of a warlike country, accessible only over mountain roads, was maintained in con-

tinual abundance: nor was it supplied merely with the necessaries and comforts of life. The powerful escorts drew merchants and artificers from all parts, to repair, as if in caravans, to this great military market. In a little while the camp abounded with tradesmen and artists of all kinds, to administer to the luxury and ostentation of the youthful chivalry. Here might be seen cunning artificers in steel, and accomplished armourers, achieving those rare and sumptuous helmets and cuirasses richly gilt, inlaid, and embossed, in which the Spanish cavaliers delighted; saddlers, and harness-makers, and horse-milliners also, whose tents glittered with gorgeous housings and caparisons. The merchants spread forth their sumptuous silks, cloths, brocades, fine linen, and tapestry. The tents of the nobility were prodigally decorated with all kinds of the richest stuffs, and dazzled the eye with their magnificence: nor could the grave looks and grave speeches of King Ferdinand prevent his youthful cavaliers from vying with each other in the splendour of their dresses and caparisons, on all occasions of parade and ceremony.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Of the disasters which befel the camp.

While the Christian camp, thus gay and gorgeous, spread itself out like a holyday pageant before the walls of Baza; while a long line of beasts of burden, laden with provisions and luxuries, were seen descending the valley from morning till night, and pouring into the camp a continued stream of abundance, the unfortunate garrison found their resources rapidly wasting away, and famine already began to pinch the peaceful part of the community.

Cidi Yahye had acted with great spirit and valour, as long as there was any prospect of success; but he began to lose his usual fire and animation, and was observed to pace the walls of Baza with a pensive air, casting many a wistful look towards the Christian camp, and sinking into profound reveries and cogitations. The veteran alcayde, Mohammed Ben Hassan, noticed these desponding moods, and endea-

voured to rally the spirits of the prince. "The rainy season is at hand," would he cry: "the floods will soon pour down from the mountains; the rivers will overflow their banks, and inundate the valleys. The Christian king already begins to waver; he dare not linger, and encounter such a season, in a plain cut up by canals and rivulets. A single wintry storm from our mountains would wash away his canvas city, and sweep off those gay pavilions, like wreaths of snow before the blast."

The Prince Cidi Yahye took heart at these words, and counted the days as they passed, until the stormy season should commence. As he watched the Christian camp, he beheld it one morning in universal commotion. There was an unusual sound of hammers in every part, as if some new engines of war were constructing. At length, to his astonishment, the walls and roofs of houses began to appear above the bulwarks. In a little while there were above a thousand edifices of wood and plaster erected, covered with tiles, taken from the demolished towers of the orchards, and bearing the pennons of various commanders and cavaliers; while the common soldiery constructed huts

of clay and branches of trees, and thatched them with straw. Thus, to the dismay of the Moors, within four days the light tents and gay pavilions, which had whitened their hills and plains, passed away like summer clouds; and the unsubstantial camp assumed the solid appearance of a city laid out into streets and squares. In the centre rose a large edifice, which overlooked the whole, and the royal standard of Arragon and Castile, proudly floating above it, showed it to be the palace of the king*.

Ferdinand had taken the sudden resolution thus to turn his camp into a city, partly to provide against the approaching season, and partly to convince the Moors of his fixed determination to continue the siege. In their haste to erect their dwellings, however, the Spanish cavaliers had not properly considered the nature of the climate. For the greater part of the year there scarcely falls a drop of rain on the thirsty soil of Andalusia: the ramblas, or dry channels of the torrents, remain deep and arid gashes and clefts in the sides of

* Cura de los Palacios. Pulgar, &c.

the mountains. The perennial streams shrink up to mere threads of water, which, tinkling down the bottoms of the deep barrancas or ravines, scarcely feed and keep alive the rivers of the valleys. The rivers, almost lost in their wide and naked body, seem like thirsty rills, winding in serpentine mazes through deserts of sand and stones; and so shallow and tranquil in their course, as to be forded in safety in almost every part. One autumnal tempest of rain, however, changes the whole face of nature. The clouds break in deluges among the vast congregation of mountains. The ramblas are suddenly filled with raging floods, the tinkling rivulets swell to thundering torrents, that come roaring down from the mountains, precipitating great masses of rocks in their career. The late meandering river spreads over its once naked bed, lashes its surges against the banks, and rushes, like a wide and foaming inundation, through the valley.

Scarcely had the Christians finished their slightly built edifices, when an autumnal tempest of the kind came scouring from the mountains. The camp was immediately overflowed. Many of the houses, undermined by the floods

or beaten by the rain, crumbled away, and fell to the earth, burying man and beast beneath their ruins. Several valuable lives were lost, and great numbers of horses and other animals perished. To add to the distress and confusion of the camp, the daily supply of provisions suddenly ceased; for the rain had broken up the roads, and rendered the rivers impassable. A panic seized upon the army, for the cessation of a single day's supply produced a scarcity of bread and provender. Fortunately the rain was but transient. The torrents rushed by, and ceased; the rivers shrunk back again to their narrow channels; and the convoys, that had been detained upon their banks, arrived safely in the camp.

No sooner did Queen Isabella hear of this interruption of her supplies, than, with her usual vigilance and activity, she provided against its recurrence. She despatched six thousand foot soldiers, under the command of experienced officers, to repair the roads, and to make causeways and bridges, for the distance of seven Spanish leagues. The troops, also, who had been stationed in the mountains by the king, to guard the defiles, made two

paths, one for the convoys going to the camp, and the other for those returning, that they might not meet and impede each other. The edifices, which had been demolished by the late floods, were rebuilt in a firmer manner, and precautions were taken to protect the camp from future inundations.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Encounter between the Christians and Moors before Baza; and the devotion of the inhabitants to the defence of the city.

When King Ferdinand beheld the ravage and confusion produced by a single autumnal storm, and bethought him of all the maladies to which a besieging camp is exposed, in inclement seasons, he began to feel his compassion kindling for the suffering people of Baza, and an inclination to grant them more favourable terms. He sent, therefore, several messages to the alcayde, Mohammed ben Hassan, offering liberty of person and security of property for the inhabitants, and large rewards for himself, if he would surrender the city. The veteran Mohammed was not to be dazzled by the splendid offers of the monarch. He had received exaggerated accounts of the damage done to the Christian camp by the late storm, and of the sufferings and discontents of the army, in consequence of the

transient interruption of supplies. He considered the overtures of Ferdinand as proofs of the desperate state of his affairs. "A little more patience," said the shrewd old warrior, "and we shall see this crowd of Christian locusts driven away before the winter storms. When they once turn their backs, it will be our lot to strike; and, with the help of Allah, the blow shall be decisive." He sent a firm though courteous refusal to the Christian monarch; and, in the mean time, animated his companions to sally forth, with more spirit than ever, to attack the Spanish outposts, and those labouring in the trenches. The consequence was a daily occurrence of the most daring and bloody skirmishes, that cost the lives of many of the bravest and most adventurous cavaliers of either army.

In one of these sallies, near three hundred horse and two thousand foot mounted the heights behind the city, to capture the Christians who were employed upon the works. They came by surprise upon a body of guards, esquires of the Count de Ureña; killed some, put the rest to flight, and pursued them down the mountain, until they came in sight

of a small force under the Count de Tendilla and Gonsalvo of Cordova. The Moors came rushing down with such fury, that many of the men of the Count de Tendilla betook themselves to flight. The brave count considered it less dangerous to fight than to flee. Bracing his buckler, therefore, and grasping his trusty weapon, he stood his ground with his accustomed prowess. Gonsalvo of Cordova ranged himself by his side; and, marshalling the troops which remained with them, a valiant front was made to the Moors.

The infidels pressed them hard, and were gaining the advantage, when Alonzo de Aguilar, hearing of the danger of his brother Gonsalvo, flew to his assistance, accompanied by the Count of Ureña and a body of their troops. A hot contest ensued, from cliff to cliff and glen to glen. The Moors were fewer in number; but they excelled in the dexterity and lightness requisite for these scrambling skirmishes. They were at length driven from their vantage ground, and pursued by Alonzo de Aguilar and his brother Gonsalvo to the very suburbs of the city; leaving many of the bravest of their men upon the field.

Such was one of innumerable rough encounters, which were daily taking place; in which many brave cavaliers were slain, without any apparent benefit to either party. The Moors, notwithstanding repeated defeats and losses, continued to sally forth daily with astonishing spirit and vigour; and the obstinacy of their defence seemed to increase with their sufferings.

The Prince Cidi Yahye was ever foremost in these sallies; but he grew daily more despairing of success. All the money in the military chest was expended, and there was no longer wherewithal to pay the hired troops. Still the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan undertook to provide for this emergency. Summoning the principal inhabitants, he represented the necessity of some exertion and sacrifice on their part, to maintain the defence of the city. "The enemy," said he, "dreads the approach of winter, and our perseverance drives him to despair. A little longer, and he will leave you in quiet enjoyment of your towers and families. But our troops must be paid, to keep them in good heart. Our money is exhausted, and all our supplies are cut off.

It is impossible to continue our defence without your aid."

Upon this the citizens consulted together; and they collected all their vessels of gold and silver, and brought them to Mohammed ben Hassan. "Take these," said they, "and coin them, or sell them, or pledge them for money, wherewith to pay the troops." The women of Bara, also, were seized with generous emulation. "Shall we deck ourselves with gorgeous apparel," said they, "when our country is desolate, and its defenders in want of bread?" So they took their collars, and bracelets, and anklets, and other ornaments of gold, and all their jewels, and placed them in the hands of the veteran alcayde. "Take these spoils of our vanity," said they; and let them contribute to the defence of our homes and families. If Baza be delivered, we need no jewels to grace our rejoicing; and if Baza falls, of what avail are ornaments to the captive?"

By these contributions was Mohammed enabled to pay the soldiery, and to carry on the defence of the city with unabated spirit. Tidings were speedily conveyed to King Ferdinand of this generous devotion on the part

of the people of Baza, and the hopes which the Moorish commanders gave them, that the Christian army would soon abandon the siege in despair. "They shall have a convincing proof of the fallacy of such hopes," said the politic monarch. So he wrote forthwith to Queen Isabella, praying her to come to the camp in state, with all her train and retinue; and publicly to take up her residence there for the winter. By these means, the Moors would be convinced of the settled determination of the sovereigns to persist in the siege until the city should surrender; and he trusted they would be brought to speedy capitulation.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

How Queen Isabella arrives at the camp; and the consequences of her arrival.

Mohammed ben Hassan still encouraged his companions, with hopes that the royal army would soon relinquish the siege; when they heard one day shouts of joy from the Christian camp, and thundering salvas of artillery. Word was brought at the same time, from the sentinels on the watchtowers, that a Christian army was approaching down the valley. Mohammed and his fellow commanders ascended one of the highest towers of the walls, and beheld in truth a numerous force, in shining array, descending the hills; and heard the distant clangor of the trumpets, and the faint swell of the triumphant music. As the host drew nearer, they descried a stately dame, magnificently attired, whom they soon discovered to be the queen. She was riding on a mule; the sumptuous trappings of which

were resplendent with gold, and reached to the ground. On her right hand rode her daughter, the Princess Isabella, equally splendid in her array: on her left, the venerable grand cardinal of Spain. A noble train of ladies and cavaliers followed her, together with pages and esquires, and a numerous guard of hidalgos of high rank, arrayed in superb armour. When the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan beheld, that this was the Queen Isabella, arriving in state to take up her residence in the camp, his heart failed him. He shook his head mournfully, and, turning to his captains, "Cavaliers," said he, "the fate of Baza is decided!"

The Moorish commanders remained gazing, with a mingled feeling of grief and admiration, at this magnificent pageant, which foreboded the fall of their city. Some of the troops would have sallied forth in one of their desperate skirmishes, to attack the royal guard; but the Prince Cidi Yahye forbade them: nor would he allow any artillery to be discharged, or any molestation or insult to be offered: for the character of Isabella was venerated even by the Moors; and most of the commanders

possessed that high and chivalrous courtesy, which belongs to heroic spirits; for they were among the noblest and bravest cavaliers of the Moorish nation.

The inhabitants of Baza, when they learned, that the Christian queen was approaching the camp, eagerly sought every eminence that could command a view of the plain; and every battlement, and tower, and mosque, was covered with turbaned heads, gazing at the glorious spectacle. They beheld King Ferdinand issue forth in royal state, attended by the Marquis of Cadiz, the master of Santiago, the Duke of Alva, the admiral of Castile, and many other nobles of renown; while the whole chivalry of the camp, sumptuously arrayed, followed in his train, and the populace rent the air with acclamations at the sight of the patriot queen.

When the sovereigns had met and embraced each other, the two hosts mingled together, and entered the camp in martial pomp; and the eyes of the infidel beholders were dazzled by the flash of armour, the splendour of golden caparisons, the gorgeous display of silks, and brocades, and velvets, of tossing plumes and

fluttering banners. There was at the same time a triumphant sound of drums and trumpets, clarions and sackbuts, mingled with the sweet melody of the dulcimer, which came swelling in bursts of harmony, that seemed to rise up to the heavens*.

"On the arrival of the queen," says the historian Hernando del Pulgar, who was present at the time, "it was marvellous to behold how, all at once, the rigour and turbulence of war was softened, and the storm of passions sunk into a calm. The sword was sheathed, the crossbow no longer lanched its deadly shafts, and the artillery, which had hitherto kept up an incessant uproar, now ceased its thundering. On both sides there was still a vigilant guard kept up, the sentinels bristled the walls of Baza with their lances, and the guards patrolled the Christian camp; but there was no sallying forth to skirmish, nor any wanton violence or carnage.

Prince Cidi Yahye saw, by the arrival of the queen, that the Christians were determined to continue the siege; and he knew, that

* Cura de los Palacios.

the city would have to capitulate. He had been prodigal of the lives of his soldiers, as long as he thought a military good was to be gained by the sacrifice; but he was sparing of their blood in a hopeless cause, and wary of exasperating the enemy by an obstinate, hopeless defence.

At the request of Prince Cidi Yahye, a parley was granted, and the master commander of Leon, Don Gutiere de Cardenas, was appointed to confer with the valiant alcayde Mohammed. They met at an appointed place, within view of both camp and city, honourably attended by cavaliers of either army. Their meeting was highly courteous; for they had learned, from rough encounters in the field, to admire each other's prowess. The commander of Leon, in an earnest speech, pointed out the hopelessness of any further defence, and warned Mohammed of the ills which Malaga had incurred by its obstinacy. "I promise, in the name of my sovereign," said he, "that, if you surrender immediately, the inhabitants shall be treated as subjects, and protected, in property, liberty, and religion. If you refuse, you, who are now renowned as

an able and judicious commander, will be chargeable with the confiscations, captivities, and deaths, which may be suffered by the people of Baza."

The commander ceased, and Mohammed returned to the city, to consult with his companions. It was evident, that all further resistance was hopeless; but the Moorish commanders felt, that a cloud might rest upon their names, should they, of their own discretion, surrender so important a place, without its having sustained an assault. Prince Cidi Yahye requested permission, therefore, to send an envoy to Guadix, with a letter to the old monarch, El Zagal, treating of the surrender. The request was granted; a safe conduct assured to the envoy, and the veteran alcayde, Mohammed ben Hassan, departed upon this momentous mission.

CHAPTER LXXX.

Surrender of Baza.

The old warrior king was seated in an inner chamber of the castle of Guadix, much cast down in spirit, and ruminating on his gloomy fortunes, when an envoy from Baza was announced, and the veteran alcayde Mohammed stood before him. El Zagal saw disastrous tidings written in his countenance. "How fares it with Baza?" said he, summoning up his spirits to the question. "Let this inform thee," replied Mohammed; and he delivered into his hands the letter from the Prince Cidi Yahye. This letter spoke of the desperate situation of Baza, the impossibility of holding out longer, without assistance from El Zagal, and the favourable terms offered by the Castilian sovereigns. Had it been written by any other person, El Zagal might have received it with distrust and indignation; but he confided in Cidi Yahye as in a second self; and the

words of his letter sunk deep in his heart. When he had finished reading it, he sighed deeply, and remained for some time lost in thought, with his head drooping upon his bosom. Recovering himself at length, he called together the alfaquis, and the old men of Guadix; and, communicating the tidings from Baza, solicited their advice. It was a sign of sore trouble of mind and dejection of heart, when El Zagal sought the advice of others; but his fierce courage was tamed, for he saw the end of his power approaching. The alfaquis and the old men did but increase the distraction of his mind by a variety of counsel, none of which appeared of any avail; for, unless Baza were succoured, it was impossible that it should hold out, and every attempt to succour it had proved ineffectual.

El Zagal dismissed his council in despair, and summoned the veteran Mohammed before him. "Allah achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great; there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet! Return to my cousin, Cidi Yahye: tell him, it is out of my power to aid him; he must do as seems to him for the best. The people of Baza have performed deeds

worthy of immortal fame: I cannot ask them to encounter further ills and perils, in maintaining a hopeless defence."

The reply of El Zagal determined the fate of the city. Cidi Yahye and his fellow commanders immediately capitulated, and were granted the most favourable terms. The cavaliers and soldiers, who had come from other parts to the defence of the place, were permitted to depart freely, with their arms, horses, and effects. The inhabitants had their choice, either to depart with their property, or to dwell in the suburbs, in the enjoyment of their religion and laws; taking an oath of fealty to the sovereigns, and paying the same tribute they had paid to the Moorish kings. The city and citadel were to be delivered up in six days; within which period the inhabitants were to remove all their effects; and, in the mean time, they were to place, as hostages, fifteen Moorish youths, sons of the principal inhabitants, in the hands of the commanders of Leon. When Cidi Yahye and the alcayde Mohammed came to deliver up the hostages, among whom were the sons of the latter, they paid homage to the king and queen; who

received them with the utmost courtesy and kindness, and ordered magnificent presents to be given to them, and likewise to the other Moorish cavaliers; consisting of money, robes, horses, and other things of great value.

The Prince Cidi Yahye was so captivated by the grace, the dignity, and generosity of Isabella, and the princely courtesy of Ferdinand, that he vowed never again to draw his sword against such magnanimous sovereigns.

The queen, charmed with his gallant bearing and his animated profession of devotion, assured him, that, having him on her side, she already considered the war terminated, which had desolated the kingdom of Granada.

Mighty and irresistible are words of praise from the lips of sovereigns. Cidi Yahye was entirely subdued by this fair speech from the illustrious Isabella. His heart burned with a sudden flame of loyalty towards the sovereigns. He begged to be enrolled amongst the most devoted of their subjects; and, in the fervour of his sudden zeal, engaged, not merely to dedicate his sword to their service, but to exert all his influence, which was great,

in persuading his cousin, Muley Abdalla el Zagal, to surrender the cities of Guadix and Almeria, and to give up all further hostilities. Nay, so powerful was the effect produced upon his mind by his conversations with the sovereigns, that it extended even to his religion; for he became immediately enlightened as to the heathenish abominations of the vile sect of Mahomet, and struck with the truths of Christianity, as illustrated by such powerful monarchs. He consented, therefore, to be baptized, and to be gathered into the fold of the church. The pious Agapida indulges in a triumphant strain of exultation, on the sudden and surprising conversion of this princely infidel. He considers it one of the greatest achievements of the catholic sovereigns; and, indeed, one of the marvellous occurrences of this holy war. "But it is given to saints and pious monarchs," says he, "to work miracles in the cause of the faith; and such did the most catholic Ferdinand, in the conversion of the Prince Cidi Yahye."

Some of the Arabian writers have sought to lessen the wonder of this miracle, by alluding to great revenues, granted to the prince and

his heirs by the Castilian monarchs; together with a territory in Marchena, with towns, lands, and vassals. "But in this," says Agapida, "we only see a wise precaution of King Ferdinand, to clinch and secure the conversion of his proselyte." The policy of the catholic monarch was at all times equal to his piety. Instead also of vaunting of this great conversion, and making a public parade of the entry of the prince into the church, King Ferdinand ordered, that the baptism should be performed in private, and kept a profound secret. He feared, that Cidi Yahye might otherwise be denounced as an apostate, and abhorred and abandoned by the Moors; and thus his influence destroyed in bringing the war to a speedy termination*.

The veteran Mohammed ben Hassan was likewise won by the magnanimity and munificence of the Castilian sovereigns, and entreated to be received into their service; and his example was followed by many other Moorish cavaliers, whose services were graciously accepted and magnificently rewarded.

* Conde, tom. iii. cap. 40.

Thus, after a siege of six months and twenty days, the city of Baza surrendered, on the 4th of December, 1489, the festival of the glorious Santa Barbara; who is said, in the catholic calendar, to preside over thunder and lightning, fire and gunpowder, and all kinds of combustible explosions. The king and queen made their solemn and triumphal entry on the following day; and the public joy was heightened by the sight of upwards of five hundred Christian captives, men, women, and children, delivered from the Moorish dungeons.

The loss of the Christians, in this siege, amounted to twenty thousand men; of whom seventeen thousand died of disease, and not a few of mere cold; "a kind of death," says the historian Mariana, "peculiarly uncomfortable. But," adds the venerable Jesuit, "as these latter were chiefly people of ignoble rank, baggage carriers and such like, the loss was not of great importance."

The surrender of Baza was followed by that of Almuñecar, Tavernas, and most of the fortresses of the Alpuxarra mountains. The inhabitants hoped, by prompt and voluntary submission, to secure equally favourable terms

with those granted to the captured city; and the alcaydes, to receive similar rewards to those lavished on its commanders; nor were either of them disappointed. The inhabitants were permitted to remain as mudexarras, in the quiet enjoyment of their property and religion; and as to the alcaydes, when they came to the camp to render up their charges, they were received by Ferdinand with distinguished favour, and rewarded with presents of money, in proportion to the importance of the places they had commanded. Care was taken by the politic monarch, however, not to wound their pride, or shock their delicacy: so these sums were paid, under colour of arrears due to them, for their services to the former government. Ferdinand had conquered by dint of sword, in the earlier part of the war; but he found gold as potent as steel in this campaign of Baza.

With several of these mercenary chieftains came one, named Ali Aben Fahar; a seasoned warrior, who had held many important commands. He was a Moor of a lofty, stern, and melancholy aspect; and stood silent and apart, while his companions surrendered their several

fortresses, and retired laden with treasure. When it came to his turn to speak, he addressed the sovereigns with the frankness of a soldier, but with a tone of dejection and despair. "I am a Moor," said he, "and of Moorish lineage; and am alcayde of the fair towns and castles of Purchena and Paterna. These were intrusted to me to defend; but those, that should have stood by me, have lost all strength and courage, and seek only for security. These fortresses, therefore, most potent sovereigns, are yours, whenever you will send to take possession of them."

Large sums of money in gold were immediately ordered by Ferdinand to be delivered to the alcayde, as a recompense for so important a surrender. The Moor, however, put back the gift with a firm and haughty demeanour. "I come not," said he, "to sell what is not mine, but to yield what fortune has made yours; and your majesties may rest assured, that, had I been properly seconded, death would have been the price at which I would have sold my fortresses, and not the gold you offer me."

The Castilian monarchs were struck with

the lofty and loyal spirit of the Moor, and desired to engage a man of such fidelity in their service; but the proud Moslem could not be induced to serve the enemies of his nation and his faith.

"Is there nothing, then," said Queen Isabella, "that we can do to gratify thee, and to prove to thee our regard?" "Yes," replied the Moor; "I have left behind me, in the towns and valleys which I have surrendered, many of my unhappy countrymen, with their wives and children, who cannot tear themselves from their native abodes. Give me your royal word, that they shall be protected in the peaceable enjoyment of their religion and their homes." "We promise it," said Isabella; "they shall dwell in peace and security. But for thyself; what dost thou ask for thyself?" "Nothing," replied Ali, "but permission to pass unmolested, with horses and effects, into Africa."

The Castilian monarchs would fain have forced upon him gold and silver, and superb horses richly caparisoned; not as rewards, but as marks of personal esteem: but Ali Aben Fahar declined all presents and distinctions,

as if he thought it criminal to flourish individually, during a time of public distress; and disdained all prosperity, that seemed to grow out of the ruins of his country.

Having received a royal passport, he gathered together his horses and servants, his armour and weapons, and all his warlike effects, bade adieu to his weeping countrymen, with a brow stamped with anguish, but without shedding a tear, and, mounting his Barbary steed, turned his back upon the delightful valleys of his conquered country; departing on his lonely way, to seek a soldier's fortune amidst the burning sands of Africa*.

* Pulgar. Garibay, lib. xl. cap. 40. Cura de los Palacios.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

Submission of El Zagal to the Castilian sovereigns.

Evil tidings never fail by the way through lack of messengers. They are wafted on the wings of the wind; and it is as if the very birds of the air would bear them to the ear of the unfortunate. The old king, El Zagal, buried himself in the recesses of his castle, to hide himself from the light of day, which no longer shone prosperously upon him; but every hour brought missives, thundering at the gate with the tale of some new disaster. Fortress after fortress had laid its keys at the feet of the Christian sovereigns. Strip by strip of warrior mountain and green fruitful valley was torn from his domains, and added to the territories of the conquerors. Scarcely a remnant remained to him, except a tract of the Alpuxarras, and the noble cities of Guadix and Almeria. No one any longer stood in awe of the fierce old monarch: the terror of

his frown had declined with his power. He had arrived at that stage of adversity, when a man's friends feel imboldened to tell him hard truths, and to give him unpalatable advice, and when his spirit is bowed down to listen quietly, if not meekly.

El Zagal was seated on his divan, his whole spirit absorbed in rumination on the transitory nature of human glory, when his kinsman and brother in law, the Prince Cidi Yahye, was announced. That illustrious convert to the true faith, and the interest of the conquerors of his country, had hastened to Guadix with all the fervour of a new proselyte, eager to prove his zeal in the service of Heaven and the Castilian sovereigns, by persuading the old monarch to abjure his faith, and surrender his possessions.

Cidi Yahye still bore the guise of a Moslem; for his conversion was as yet a secret. The stern heart of El Zagal softened at beholding the face of a kinsman, in this hour of adversity. He folded his cousin to his bosom, and gave thanks to Allah, that, amidst all his troubles, he had still a friend and counsellor, on whom he might rely. Cidi Yahye soon entered upon

the real purpose of his mission. He represented to El Zagal the desperate state of affairs, and the irretrievable decline of Moorish power in the kingdom of Granada. "Fate," said he, "is against our arms; our ruin is written in the heavens: remember the prediction of the astrologers, at the birth of your nephew Boabdil. We had hoped, that their prediction was accomplished by his capture at Lucena; but it is now evident, that the stars portended, not a temporary and passing reverse of the kingdom, but a final overthrow. The constant succession of disasters, which have attended our efforts, show, that the sceptre of Granada is doomed to pass into the hands of the Christian monarchs. Such," concluded the prince, emphatically, and with a pious reverence, "such is the almighty will of God!"

El Zagal listened to these words in mute attention, without so much as moving a muscle of his face, or winking an eyelid. When the prince had concluded, he remained for a long time silent and pensive. At length, heaving a profound sigh from the very bottom of his heart, "Alahuma subahana hu!" exclaimed he, "the will of God be done! Yes, my

cousin, it is but too evident, that such is the will of Allah; and what he wills, he fails not to accomplish. Had he not decreed the fall of Granada, this arm, and this cimeter, would have maintained it*."

"What then remains," said Cidi Yahye, "but to draw the most advantage from the wreck of empire that is left you? To persist in a war, is to bring complete desolation upon the land, and ruin and death upon its faithful inhabitants. Are you disposed to yield up your remaining towns to your nephew, El Chiquito, that they may augment his power, and derive protection from his alliance with the Christian sovereigns?"

The eye of El Zagal flashed fire at this suggestion. He grasped the hilt of his cimeter, and gnashed his teeth in fury. "Never," cried he, "will I make terms with that recreant and slave! sooner would I see the banners of the Christian monarchs floating above my walls, than they should add to the possessions of the vassal Boabdil!"

Cidi Yahye immediately seized upon this

* Conde, t. iii. c. 40.

idea, and urged El Zagal to make a frank and entire surrender. "Trust," said he, "to the magnanimity of the Castilian sovereigns. They will doubtless grant you high and honourable terms. It is better to yield to them as friends, what they must infallibly and before long wrest from you as enemies: for such, my cousin, is the almighty will of God!" "Alahuma subahana hu!" repeated El Zagal, "the will of God be done!" So the old monarch bowed his haughty neck, and agreed to surrender his territories to the enemies of his faith, rather than suffer them to augment the Moslem power, under the sway of his nephew.

Cidi Yahye now returned to Baza, empowered by El Zagal to treat, on his behalf, with the Christian sovereigns. The prince felt a species of exultation, as he expatiated on the rich relics of empire, which he was authorized to cede. There was a great part of that line of mountains, which extends from the metropolis to the Mediterranean Sea, with its series of beautiful green valleys, like precious emeralds set in a golden chain. Above all these were Guadix and Almeria, two of

the most inestimable jewels in the crown of Granada.

In return for these possessions, and for the claim of El Zagal to the rest of the kingdom, the sovereigns received him into their friendship and alliance, and gave him, in perpetual inheritance, the territory of Alhamin, in the Alpuxarras, with half of the salinas, or salt pits, of Maleha. He was to enjoy the title of King of Andaraxa, with two thousand Mudejares, or conquered Moors, for subjects; and his revenues were to be made up to the sum of four millions of maravedis *: all these he was to hold as a vassal of the Castilian crown.

These arrangements being made, Cidi Yahye returned with them to Muley Abdalla; and it was concerted, that the ceremony of surrender and homage should take place at the city of Almeria.

On the 17th of December, King Ferdinand departed from Baza, with a part of his army, and the queen soon followed with the remainder. Ferdinand passed in triumph by

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 94.

several of the newly acquired towns, exulting in these trophies of his policy rather than his valour. As he drew near to Almeria, the Moorish king came forth to meet him, accompanied by the Prince Cidi Yahye, and a number of the principal inhabitants on horseback. The fierce brow of El Zagal was clouded with a kind of forced humility; but there was an impatient curl of the lip, with now and then a swelling of the bosom, and an indignant breathing from the distended nostril. It was evident he considered himself conquered, not by the power of man, but by the hand of Heaven; and while he bowed to the decrees of fate, it galled his proud spirit to have to humble himself before its mortal agent. As he approached the Christian king, he alighted from his horse, and advanced to kiss his hand, in token of homage. Ferdinand, however, respected the royal title which the Moor had held; and would not permit the ceremony; but, bending from his saddle, graciously embraced him, and requested him to remount his steed*. Several courteous speeches passed

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 93.

between them, and the fortress and city of Almeria, and all the remaining territories of El Zagal, were delivered up in form. When all was accomplished, the old warrior Moor retired to the mountains, with a handful of adherents, to seek his petty territory of Andaraxa, to bury his humiliation from the world, and to console himself with the shadowy title of a king.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Events at Granada subsequent to the submission of El Zagal.

Who can tell when to rejoice in this fluctuating world? Every wave of prosperity has its reacting surge, and we are often overwhelmed by the very billow, on which we thought to be wafted into the haven of our hopes. When Jusef Aben Commixa, the vizier of Boabdil, surnamed El Chico, entered the royal saloon of the Alhambra, and announced the capitulation of El Zagal, the heart of the youthful monarch leaped for joy. His great wish was accomplished; his uncle was defeated and dethroned; and he reigned without a rival, sole monarch of Granada. At length he was about to enjoy the fruits of his humiliation and vassalage. He beheld his throne fortified by the friendship and alliance of the Castilian monarchs; there could be no question, therefore, of its stability. "Allah achbar!" ex-

claimed he, "God is great! Rejoice with me, oh Jusef, the stars have ceased their persecution! Henceforth let no man call me El Zogoybi!"

In the first moment of his exultation, Boabdil would have ordered public rejoicings; but the shrewd Jusef shook his head. "The tempest has ceased," said he, "from one point of the heavens, but it may begin to rage from another. A troubled sea is beneath us, and we are surrounded by rocks and quicksands: let my lord the king defer rejoicings until all has settled into a calm." El Chico, however, could not remain tranquil in this day of exultation. He ordered his steed to be sumptuously caparisoned, and, issuing out of the gate of the Alhambra, descended with a glittering retinue along the avenue of trees and fountains into the city, to receive the acclamations of the populace. As he entered the great square of the vivarrambla, he beheld crowds of people in violent agitation; but, as he approached, what was his surprise to hear groans, and murmurs, and bursts of execration! The tidings had spread through Granada, that Muley Abdalla el Zagal had been driven to capitulate, and

that all his territories had fallen into the hands of the Christians. No one had inquired into the particulars, but all Granada had been thrown into a ferment of grief and indignation. In the heat of the moment, old Muley was extolled to the skies as a patriot prince, who had fought to the last for the salvation of his country; as a mirror of monarchs, scorning to compromise the dignity of his crown by any act of vassalage. Boabdil, on the contrary, had looked on exultingly at the hopeless yet heroic struggle of his uncle; he had rejoiced in the defeat of the faithful, and the triumph of unbelievers. He had aided in the dismemberment and downfal of the empire. When they beheld him riding forth in gorgeous state, in what they considered a day of humiliation for all true Moslems, they could not contain their rage, and, amidst the clamours that prevailed, Boabdil more than once heard his name coupled with the epithets of traitor and renegado.

Shocked and discomfited, the youthful monarch returned in confusion to the Alhambra. He shut himself up within its innermost courts, and remained a kind of voluntary prisoner,

until the first burst of popular feeling should subside. He trusted, that it would soon pass away; that the people would be too sensible of the sweets of peace to repine at the price at which it was obtained; at any rate, he trusted to the strong friendship of the Christian sovereigns to secure him even against the factions of his subjects.

The first missives from the politic Ferdinand showed Boabdil the value of his friendship.

The catholic monarch reminded him of a treaty which he had made, when captured in the city of Loxa. By this he had engaged, that, in case the catholic sovereigns should capture the cities of Guadix, Baza, and Almeria, he would surrender Granada into their hands within a limited time, and accept in exchange certain Moorish towns, to be held by him as their vassal. Ferdinand now informed him, that Guadix, Baza, and Almeria had fallen; he called upon him, therefore, to fulfil his engagement. If the unfortunate Boabdil had possessed the will, he had not the power, to comply with this demand. He was shut up in the Alhambra, while a tempest of popular fury raged without. Granada was thronged

by refugees from the captured towns, many of them disbanded soldiers; others broken down citizens, rendered fierce and desperate by ruin: all railed at Boabdil as the real cause of their misfortunes. How was he to venture forth in such a storm? above all, how was he to talk to such men of surrender? In his reply to Ferdinand, he represented the difficulties of his situation; and that, so far from having control over his subjects, his very life was in danger from their turbulence. He entreated the king, therefore, to rest satisfied for the present with his recent conquests, promising him, that, should he be able to regain full empire over his capital and its inhabitants, it would but be to rule over them as vassal to the Castilian crown.

Ferdinand was not to be satisfied with such a reply. The time was come to bring his game of policy to a close, and to consummate his conquest, by seating himself on the throne of the Alhambra. Professing to consider Boabdil as a faithless ally, who had broken his plighted word, he discarded him from his friendship, and addressed a second letter, not to that monarch, but to the commanders and council of

the city. He demanded a complete surrender of the place, with all the arms in the possession either of the citizens, or of others who had recently taken refuge within its walls. If the inhabitants should comply with this summons, he promised them the indulgent terms which had been granted to Baza, Guadix, and Almeria: if they should refuse, he threatened them with the fate of Malaga *.

The message of the catholic monarch produced the greatest commotion in the city. The inhabitants of the alcaceria, that busy hive of traffic, and all others who had tasted the sweets of gainful commerce during the late cessation of hostilities, were for securing their golden advantages by timely submission: others, who had wives and children, looked on them with tenderness and solicitude, and dreaded, by resistance, to bring upon them the horrors of slavery. But, on the other hand, Granada was crowded with men from all parts, ruined by the war, exasperated by their sufferings, and eager only for revenge; with others, who had been reared amidst hostilities, who had lived

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 96.

by the sword, and whom a return of peace would leave without home or hope. There were others too, no less fiery and warlike in disposition, but animated by a loftier spirit, valiant and haughty cavaliers, of the old chivalrous lineages, who had inherited a deadly hatred to the Christians from a long line of warrior ancestors, and to whom the idea was worse than death, that Granada, illustrious Granada, for ages the seat of Moorish grandeur and delight, should become the abode of unbelievers. Among these cavaliers, the most eminent was Muza ben Abil Gazan. He was of royal lineage, of a proud and generous nature, and a form combining manly strength and beauty. None could excel him in the management of the horse, and dexterous use of all kinds of weapons. His gracefulness and skill in the tourney was the theme of praise among the Moorish dames; and his prowess in the field had made him the terror of the enemy. He had long repined at the timid policy of Boabdil, and had endeavoured to counteract its enervating effects, and to keep alive the martial spirit of Granada. For this reason, he had promoted jousts, and tiltings with the reed,

and all those other public games, which bear the semblance of war. He endeavoured, also, to inculcate into his companions in arms those high chivalrous sentiments, which lead to valiant and magnanimous deeds, but which are apt to decline with the independence of a nation. The generous efforts of Muza had been in a great measure successful: he was the idol of the youthful cavaliers; they regarded him as a mirror of chivalry, and endeavoured to imitate his lofty and heroic virtues.

When Muza heard the demand of Ferdinand, that they should deliver up their arms, his eye flashed fire. "Does the Christian king think that we are old men," said he, "and that staffs will suffice us? or that we are women, and can be contented with distaffs? Let him know, that a Moor is born to the spear and the cimeter; to career the steed, bend the bow, and lanch the javelin: deprive him of these, and you deprive him of his nature. If the Christian king desire our arms, let him come and win them; but let him win them dearly. For my part, sweeter were a grave beneath the walls of Granada, on the spot I had died to defend, than the richest couch within her palaces, earned by submission to the unbeliever."

The words of Muza were received with enthusiastic shouts by the warlike part of the populace. Granada once more awoke as a warrior shaking off a disgraceful lethargy. The commanders and council partook of the public excitement, and despatched a reply to the Christian sovereigns, declaring, that they would suffer death rather than surrender their city.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

How King Ferdinand turned his hostilities against the city of Granada.

When King Ferdinand received the defiance of the Moors, he made preparations for bitter hostilities. The winter season did not admit of an immediate campaign: he contented himself, therefore, with throwing strong garrisons into all his towns and fortresses in the neighbourhood of Granada, and gave the command of all the frontier of Jaen to Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, count of Tendilla, who had shown such consummate vigilance and address in maintaining the dangerous post of Alhama. This renowned veteran established his head-quarters in the mountain city of Alcala la Real, within eight leagues of the city of Granada, and commanding the most important passes of that rugged frontier.

In the mean time, the city of Granada resounded with the stir of war. The chivalry

of the nation had again control of its councils; and the populace, having once more resumed their weapons, were anxious to wipe out the disgrace of their late passive submission, by signal and daring exploits.

Muza ben Abil Gazan was the soul of action. He commanded the cavalry, which he had disciplined with uncommon skill. He was surrounded by the noblest youth of Granada, who had caught his own generous and martial fire, and panted for the field; while the common soldiers, devoted to his person, were ready to follow him in the most desperate enterprises. He did not allow their courage to cool for want of action. The gates of Granada once more poured forth legions of light scouring cavalry, which skirred the country up to the very gates of the Christian fortresses; sweeping off flocks and herds. The name of Muza became formidable throughout the frontier. He had many encounters with the enemy, in the rough passes of the mountains; in which the superior lightness and dexterity of his cavalry gave him the advantage. The sight of his glistening legion, returning across the vega with long caval-

gadas of booty, was hailed by the Moors as a revival of their ancient triumphs; but when they beheld Christian banners, borne into their gates as trophies, the exultation of the light minded populace was beyond all bounds. The winter passed away, the spring advanced; yet Ferdinand delayed to take the field. He knew the city of Granada to be too strong and populous to be taken by assault, and too full of provisions to be speedily reduced by siege. "We must have patience and perseverance," said the politic monarch. "By ravaging the country this year, we shall produce a scarcity the next; and then the city may be invested with effect."

An interval of peace, aided by the quick vegetation of a prolific soil and happy climate, had restored the vega to all its luxuriance and beauty. The green pastures on the borders of the Xenil were covered with flocks and herds. The blooming orchards gave promise of abundant fruit; and the open plain was waving with ripening corn. The time was at hand to put in the sickle and reap the golden harvest, when, suddenly, a torrent of war came sweeping down from the mountains;

and Ferdinand, with an army of five thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, appeared before the walls of Granada. He had left the queen and princess at the fortress of Moclin; and came, attended by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Marquis de Villena, the Counts of Ureña and Cabras, Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and other renowned cavaliers. On this occasion King Ferdinand, for the first time, led his son, Prince Juan, into the field; and bestowed upon him the dignity of knighthood. As if to stimulate him to grand achievements, the ceremony took place on the banks of the grand canal, almost beneath the embattled walls of that warlike city, the object of such daring enterprises; and in the midst of that famous vega, which had been the field of so many chivalrous exploits. High above them shone resplendent the red towers of the Alhambra, rising from amidst delicious groves; with the standard of Mahomet waving defiance to the Christian arms.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia, and the valiant Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, were sponsors; and all the chivalry of

the camp was assembled on the occasion. The prince, after he had been knighted, bestowed the same honour on several youthful cavaliers of high rank, just entering, like himself, on the career of arms.

Ferdinand did not loiter in carrying his desolating plans into execution. He detached parties in every direction, to scour the country. Villages were sacked, burnt, and destroyed; and the lovely vega once more was laid waste with fire and sword. The ravage was carried so close to Granada, that the city was wrapped in the smoke of its hamlets and gardens. The dismal cloud rolled up the hill, and hung about the towers of the Alhambra; where the unfortunate Boabdil still remained, shut up from the indignation of his subjects. The hapless monarch smote his breast, as he looked down from his mountain palace on the desolation effected by his late ally. He dared not even show himself in arms among the populace; for they cursed him, as the cause of the miseries brought anew to their doors. The Moors, however, did not suffer the Christians to carry on their ravages as unmolested as in former years. Muza incited

them to incessant sallies. He divided his cavalry into small squadrons, each led by a daring commander. They were taught to hover round the Christian camp; to harass it from various and opposite quarters, cutting off convoys and straggling detachments; to waylay the army in its ravaging expeditions, lurking among rocks and passes of the mountains, or in hollows and thickets of the plain; and practising a thousand stratagems and surprises.

The Christian army had one day spread itself out, rather unguardedly, in its foraging about the vega. As the troops commanded by the Marquis de Villena approached the skirts of the mountains, they beheld a number of Moorish peasants, hastily driving a herd of cattle into a narrow glen. The soldiers, eager for booty, pressed in pursuit of them. Scarcely had they entered the glen, when shouts arose from every side, and they were furiously attacked by an ambuscade of horse and foot. Some of the Christians took to flight; others stood their ground, and fought valiantly. The Moors had the vantage ground. Some showered darts and arrows from the clefts of

the rocks; others fought, hand to hand, on the plain; while their cavalry, rapid as lightning in their movements, carried havoc into the midst of the Christian forces. The Marquis de Villena, with his brother, Don Alonzo de Pacheco, at the first onset of the Moors, spurred into the hottest of the fight. They had scarce entered, when Don Alonzo was struck lifeless from his horse, before the eyes of his brother. Estevan de Suzon, a gallant captain, fell, fighting bravely by the side of the marquis; who remained with his chamberlain Solier, and a handful of knights, surrounded by the enemy. Several cavaliers, from other parts of the army, hastened to their assistance; when King Ferdinand, seeing that the Moors had the vantage ground, and that the Christians were suffering severely, gave signal for retreat. The marquis obeyed slowly and reluctantly; for his heart was full of grief and rage at the death of his brother. As he was retiring, he beheld his faithful chamberlain, Solier, defending himself bravely against six Moors. The marquis turned, and rushed to his rescue. He killed two of the enemy with his own hand, and put the rest to

flight. One of the Moors, however, in retreating, rose in his stirrups, and, hurling his lance at the marquis, wounded him in the right arm, and crippled him for life.

In consequence of this wound, the marquis was ever after obliged to write his signature with his left hand, though capable of managing his lance with his right. The queen demanded one day of him, why he had adventured his life for that of a domestic. "Does not your majesty think," replied he, "that I ought to risk one life for him, who would have adventured three for me, had he possessed them?" The queen was charmed with the magnanimity of the reply; and often quoted the marquis, as setting an heroic example to the chivalry of the age.

Such was one of the many ambuscades concerted by Muza; nor did he hesitate, at times, to present a bold front to the Christian forces, and to defy them in the open field. King Ferdinand soon perceived, however, that the Moors seldom provoked a battle without having the advantage of the ground; and that, though the Christians generally appeared to have the victory, they suffered the

greatest loss; for retreating was a part of the Moorish system, by which they would draw their pursuers into confusion, and then turn upon them with a more violent and fatal attack. He commanded his captains, therefore, to decline all challenges to skirmish, and to pursue a secure system of destruction; ravaging the country, and doing all possible injury to the enemy, with slight risk to themselves.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

The fate of the castle of Roma.

About two leagues from Granada, on an eminence commanding an extensive view of the vega, stood the strong Moorish castle of Roma; a great place of refuge and security. Hither the neighbouring peasantry drove their flocks and herds, and hurried with their most precious effects, on the irruption of a Christian force; and any foraging or skirmishing party from Granada, on being intercepted in their return, threw themselves into Roma, manned its embattled towers, and set the enemy at defiance. The garrison were accustomed to these sudden claims upon their protection; to have parties of Moors clattering up to their gates, so hotly pursued, that there was barely time to throw open the portal, receive them within, and shut out their pursuers: while the Christian cavaliers had many a time reined in their panting steeds at the very entrance

of the barbacan, and retired, cursing the strong walls of Roma, that robbed them of their prey.

The late ravages of Ferdinand, and the continual skirmishings in the vega, had roused the vigilance of the castle. One morning early, as the sentinels kept watch upon the battlements, they beheld a cloud of dust advancing rapidly from a distance. Turbans and Moorish weapons soon caught their eyes; and as the whole approached, they descried a drove of cattle, urged on in great haste, and conveyed by one hundred and forty Moors, who led with them two Christian captives in chains.

When the cavalgada had arrived near to the castle, a Moorish cavalier of noble and commanding mien, and splendid attire, rode up to the foot of the tower, and entreated admittance. He stated, that they were returning with rich booty, from a foray into the lands of the Christians; but that the enemy was on their traces, and they feared to be overtaken before they could reach Granada. The sentinels descended in all haste, and flung open the gates. The long cavalgada defiled into

the courts of the castle, which were soon filled with lowing and bleating flocks and herds, with neighing and stamping steeds, and with fierce looking Moors from the mountains. The cavalier, who had asked admission, was the chief of the party; he was somewhat advanced in life, of a lofty and gallant bearing, and had with him a son, a young man of great fire and spirit. Close by them followed the two Christian captives, with looks cast down and disconsolate.

The soldiers of the garrison had roused themselves from their sleep, and were busily occupied attending to the cattle, which crowded the courts; while the foraging party distributed themselves about the castle, to seek refreshment or repose. Suddenly a shout arose, that was echoed from court yard, and hall, and battlements. The garrison, astonished and bewildered, would have rushed to their arms, but found themselves, almost before they could make resistance, completely in the power of an enemy.

The pretended foraging party consisted of Mudexares, Moors tributary to the Christians; and the commanders were the Prince Cidi

Yahye, and his son, Alnayer. They had hastened from the mountains, with this small force, to aid the catholic sovereigns during the summer's campaign; and they had concerted to surprise that important castle, and present it to King Ferdinand, as a gage of their faith, and the first fruits of their devotion.

The politic monarch overwhelmed his new converts and allies with favours and distinctions, in return for this important acquisition; but he took care to despatch a strong force of veterans, and genuine Christian troops to man the fortress.

As to the Moors who had composed the garrison, Cidi Yahye remembered, that they were his countrymen, and could not prevail upon himself to deliver them into Christian bondage. He set them at liberty, and permitted them to repair to Granada; "a proof," says the pious Agapida, "that his conversion was not entirely consummated, but that there were still some lingerings of the infidel in his heart." His lenity was far from procuring him indulgence in the opinions of his country-

men: on the contrary, the inhabitants of Granada, when they learned from the liberated garrison the stratagem by which Roma had been captured, cursed Cidi Yahye for a traitor, and the garrison joined in the malediction.

But the indignation of the people of Granada was destined to be aroused to tenfold violence. The old warrior, Muley Abdalla el Zagal, had retired to his little mountain territory, and for a short time endeavoured to console himself, with his petty title of King of Andaraxa. He soon grew impatient, however, of the quiet and inaction of his mimic kingdom. His fierce spirit was exasperated by being shut up within such narrow limits; and his hatred rose to downright fury against Boabdil, whom he considered as the cause of his downfal. When tidings were brought him, that King Ferdinand was laying waste the vega, he took a sudden resolution: assembling the whole disposable force of his kingdom, which amounted but to two hundred men, he descended from the Alpuxarras, and sought the Christian camp; content to serve

as vassal to the enemy of his faith and his nation, so that he might see Granada wrested from the sway of his nephew.

In his blind passion, the old wrathful monarch injured his own cause, and strengthened that of his adversary. The Moors of Granada had been clamorous in his praise, extolling him as a victim to his patriotism, and had refused to believe all reports of his treaty with the Christians; but when they beheld from the walls of the city his banner mingling with the banners of the unbelievers, and arrayed against his late people, and the capital he had commanded, they broke forth into curses and revilings, and heaped all kinds of stigmas upon his name.

Their next emotion was in favour of Boabdil. They gathered under the walls of the Alhambra, and hailed him as their only hope, as the sole dependence of the country. Boabdil could scarcely believe his senses, when he heard his name mingled with praises, and greeted with acclamations. Encouraged by this unexpected gleam of popularity, he ventured forth from his retreat, and was received with rapture. All his past errors were at-

tributed to the hardships of his fortune, and the usurpation of his tyrant uncle, and whatever breath the populace could spare from uttering curses on El Zagal was expended in shouts in honour of El Chico.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

How Boabdil el Chico took the field; and his expedition against Alhendin.

For thirty days had the vega been overrun by the Christian forces, and that vast plain, lately so luxuriant and beautiful, was become a wide scene of desolation. The destroying army having accomplished its task, passed over the bridge of Pinos, and wound up into the mountains, on the way to Cordova; bearing away the spoils of towns and villages, and driving off flocks and herds, in long dusty columns. The sound of the last Christian trumpet died away along the side of the mountain of Elvira, and not a hostile squadron was seen glistening in the mournful fields of the vega.

The eyes of Boabdil el Chico were at length opened to the real policy of King Ferdinand; and he saw, that he had no longer any thing to depend upon, than the valour of his arm. No time was to be lost, in hastening to coun-

teract the effect of the late Christian ravage, and in opening the channel for distant supplies to Granada.

Scarcely had the retiring squadron of Ferdinand disappeared among the mountains, than Boabdil buckled on his armour, sallied forth from the Alhambra, and prepared to take the field. When the populace beheld him actually in arms against his late ally, both parties thronged with zeal to his standard. The hardy inhabitants also of the Sierra Nevada, or chain of snow-capped mountains, which rise above Granada, descended from their heights, and hastened into the city gates, to proffer their devotion to their youthful king. The great square of the vivarrambla shone with the proud array of legions of cavalry, decked with the colours and devices of the most ancient Moorish families, and marshalled forth by the patriot Muza to follow the king to battle.

It was on the 15th of June that Boabdil once more issued out from the gates of Granada on a martial enterprise. A few leagues from the city, within full view of it, and at the entrance of the Alpuxarra mountains, stood the powerful castle of Alhendin. It was built

on an eminence, rising from the midst of a small town, and commanding a great part of the vega, and the main road to the rich valleys of the Alpuxarras. The castle was commanded by a valiant Christian cavalier, named Mendo de Quexada, and garrisoned by two hundred and fifty men, all seasoned and experienced warriors. It was a continual thorn in the side of Granada. The labourers of the vega were swept from their fields by its hardy soldiers, convoys were cut off on the passes of the mountains; and, as the garrison commanded a full view of the gates of the city, no band of merchants could venture forth on their needful journeys, without being swooped up by the war hawks of Alhendin.

It was against this important fortress that Boabdil first led his troops. For six days and nights the fortress was closely besieged. The alcayde and his veteran garrison defended themselves valiantly; but they were exhausted by fatigue and constant watchfulness: for the Moors, being continually relieved by fresh troops from Granada, kept up an unremitted and vigorous attack. Twice the barbacan was forced, and twice the assailants were driven

forth headlong with excessive loss. The garrison, however, was diminished in number by the killed and wounded: there were no longer soldiers sufficient to man the walls and gateway. The brave alcayde was compelled to retire, with his surviving force, to the keep of the castle, in which he continued to make a desperate resistance.

The Moors now approached the foot of the tower, under shelter of wooden skreens, covered with wet hides, to ward off missiles and combustibles. They went to work vigorously to undermine the tower, placing props of wood under the foundations, to be afterwards set on fire, so as to give the besiegers time to escape before the edifice should fall. Some of the Moors plied their crossbows and arquebuses to defend the workmen, and to drive the Christians from the wall, while the latter showered down stones and darts, and melted pitch, and flaming combustibles, on the miners.

The brave Mendo de Quexada had cast many an anxious eye across the vega, in hopes of seeing some Christian force hastening to his assistance. Not a gleam of spear or helm was to be descried; for no one had dreamed of this

sudden irruption of the Moors. The alcayde saw his bravest men dead or wounded around him, while the remainder were sinking with watchfulness and fatigue. In defiance of all opposition, the Moors had accomplished their mine; the fire was brought before the walls, that was to be applied to the stanchions, in case the garrison persisted in defence; and in a little while the town would crumble beneath him, and be rent and hurled in ruins to the plain. At the very last moment, and not till then, the brave alcayde made the signal of surrender. He marched forth with the remnant of his veteran garrison, who were all made prisoners. Immediately Boabdil ordered the walls of the fortress to be razed, and fire to be applied to the stanchions, that the place might never again become a strong hold to the Christians, and a scourge to Granada. The alcayde and his fellow captives were passing in dejected convoy across the vega, when they heard a tremendous crash behind them. Turning to look upon their late fortress, they beheld nothing but a heap of tumbling ruins, and a vast column of smoke and dust, where once had stood the lofty tower of Alhendin.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

Exploit of the Count de Tendilla.

Boabdil el Chico followed up his success by capturing the two fortresses of Marchena and Bulduy; he sent his alfaquis in every direction to proclaim a holy war, and to summon all true Moslems, of town or castle, mountain or valley, to saddle steed, and buckle on armour, and hasten to the standard of the faith. The tidings spread far and wide, that Boabdil el Chico was once more in the field, and victorious. The Moors of various places, dazzled by this gleam of success, hastened to throw off their sworn allegiance to the Castilian crown, and to elevate the standard of Boabdil; and the youthful monarch flattered himself, that the whole kingdom was on the point of returning to its allegiance.

The fiery cavaliers of Granada were eager to renew those forays into the Christian lands, in which they had formerly delighted. A num-

ber of them therefore concerted an irruption to the north into the territory of Jaen, to harass the country about Quezada. They had heard of a rich convoy of merchants and wealthy travellers on the way to the city of Baeza; and they anticipated a glorious conclusion to their foray in capturing this convoy.

Assembling a number of horsemen, lightly armed, and fleetly mounted, and one hundred foot soldiers, these hardy cavaliers issued forth by night from Granada, made their way in silence through the defiles of the mountains, crossed the frontier without opposition, and suddenly appeared, as if fallen from the clouds, in the very heart of the Christian country.

The mountainous frontier, which separates Granada from Jaen, was at this time under the Count de Tendilla, the same veteran who had distinguished himself by his vigilance and sagacity, when commanding the fortress of Alhama. He held his head quarters at the city of Alcala la Real, in its impregnable fortress, perched high among the mountains, about six leagues from Granada, and predominating over all the frontier. From this cloud-capt hold among the rocks, he kept an eagle eye upon

Granada, and had his scouts and spies in all directions; so that a crow could not fly over the border without his knowledge.

His fortress was a place of refuge for the Christian captives, who escaped by night from the Moorish dungeons of Granada. Often, however, they missed their way in the defiles of the mountains; and, wandering about bewildered, either repaired by mistake to some Moorish town, or were discovered and retaken at daylight by the enemy. To prevent these accidents, the count had a tower built at his own expense, on the top of one of the heights near Alcala, which commanded a view of the vega, and the country around. Here he kept a light blazing throughout the night, as a beacon for all Christian fugitives, to guide them to a place of safety.

The count was aroused one night from his repose by shouts and cries, which came up from the town, and approached the castle walls. "To arms! to arms! the Moor is over the border!" was the cry. A Christian soldier, pale and emaciated, and who still bore traces of the Moorish chains, was brought before the count. He had been taken as guide by the Moorish

cavaliers, who had sallied from Granada, but had escaped from them among the mountains; and, after much wandering, had found his way to Alcala by the signal fire.

Notwithstanding the bustle and agitation of the moment, the Count de Tendilla listened calmly and attentively to the account of the fugitive, and questioned him minutely as to the time of departure of the Moors, and the direction and rapidity of their march. He saw, that it was too late to prevent their incursion and ravage; but he determined to await them, and give them a warm reception on their return. His soldiers were always on the alert, and ready to take the field at a moment's warning. Choosing one hundred and fifty lancers, hardy and valiant men, well disciplined, and well seasoned, as indeed were all his troops, he issued forth quietly before break of day, and, descending through the defiles of the mountains, stationed his little force in ambush in a deep barranca, or dry channel of a torrent, near Barzina, three leagues only from Granada, on the road by which the marauders would have to return. In the mean time, he sent scouts, to post themselves upon different heights, and look out for the approach of the enemy.

All day they remained concealed in the ravine, and for a great part of the following night; not a turban, however, was to be seen, excepting now and then a peasant returning from his labour, or a solitary muleteer hastening towards Granada. The cavaliers of the count began to grow restless and impatient: they feared, that the enemy might have taken some other route, or might have received intelligence of their ambuscade; and they urged him to abandon the enterprise, and return to Alcala. "We are here," said they, "almost at the gates of the Moorish capital; our movements may have been descried, and, before we are aware, Granada may pour forth its legions of swift cavalry, and crush us with an overwhelming force." The Count de Tendilla, however, persisted in remaining until his scouts should come in. About two hours before daybreak there were signal fires on certain Moorish watchtowers of the mountains. While they were regarding these with anxiety, the scouts came hurrying into the ravine. "The Moors are approaching," said they; "we have reconnoitred them near at hand. They are between one and two hundred strong, but encumbered with many prisoners and much booty." The

Christian cavaliers laid their ears to the ground, and heard the distant tramp of horses, and the tread of foot soldiers. They mounted their horses, braced their shields, couched their lances, and drew near to the entrance of the ravine where it opened upon the road.

The Moors had succeeded in waylaying and surprising the Christian convoy on its way to Baeza. They had captured a great number of prisoners, male and female, with great store of gold and jewels, and sumpter mules, laden with rich merchandise. With these they had made a forced march over the dangerous parts of the mountains; but now, being so near to Granada, they fancied themselves in perfect security. They loitered along the road, therefore, irregularly and slowly, some singing, others laughing and exulting at having eluded the boasted vigilance of the Count de Tendilla; while ever and anon was heard the plaint of some female captive, bewailing the jeopardy of her honour; and the heavy sighing of the merchant, at beholding his property in the grasp of ruthless spoilers.

The Count de Tendilla waited until some of the escort had passed the ravine; then, giving

the signal for assault, his cavaliers set up loud shouts and cries, and charged furiously into the centre of the foe. The obscurity of the place, and the hour, added to the terrors of the surprise. The Moors were thrown into confusion. Some rallied, fought desperately, and fell, covered with wounds. Thirty-six were killed, and fifty-five were made prisoners; the rest, under cover of the darkness, made their escape to the rocks and defiles of the mountains. The good count unbound the prisoners, gladdening the hearts of the merchants, by restoring to them their merchandise; the female captives, also, regained the jewels of which they had been despoiled, excepting such as had been lost beyond recovery. Forty-five saddle horses, of the choice Barbary breed, remained, as captured spoils of the Moors, together with costly armour, and booty of various kinds. Having collected every thing in haste, and arranged his cavalgada, the count urged his way with all speed for Alcala la Real, lest he should be pursued and overtaken by the Moors of Granada. As he wound up the steep ascent to his mountain city, the inhabitants poured forth to meet him with shouts of joy.

This triumph was doubly enhanced by being received at the gates of the city by his wife, the daughter of the Marquis of Villena, a lady of distinguished merit, whom he had not seen for two years, that he had been separated from his home by the arduous duties of these iron wars.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Expedition of Boabdil el Chico against Salobreña. Exploit of Hernando Perez del Pulgar.

King Boabdil found, that his diminished territory was too closely overlooked by Christian fortresses, like Alcala la Real, and too strictly watched by vigilant alcaydes, like the Count of Tendilla, to be able to maintain itself by internal resources. His foraging expedition[illegible] were liable to be intercepted and defeated; [illegible]hile the ravage of the vega had swept o[illegible]hing on which the city depended for future sustenance. He felt the want of a seaport, through which, as formerly, he might keep open a communication with Africa, and obtain reinforcements and supplies from beyond the seas. All the ports and harbours were in the hands of the Christians; and Granada and its remnant of dependent territory were completely landlocked.

In this emergency, the attention of Boabdil was called by circumstances to the seaport of

Salobreña. This redoubtable town has already been mentioned in this chronicle, as a place deemed impregnable by the Moors; insomuch that their kings were accustomed, in time of peril, to keep their treasures in its citadel. It was situate on a high rocky hill; dividing one of those rich little vegas or plains, which lie open to the Mediterranean, but run, like deep green bays, into the stern bosoms of the mountains. The vega was covered with beautiful vegetation; with rice and cotton, with groves of oranges, citrons, figs, and mulberries, and with gardens enclosed by hedges of reeds, of aloes, and the Indian fig. Running streams of cool water, from the springs and snows of the Sierra Nevada, kept this delightful valley continually fresh and verdant; while it was almost locked up by mountain barriers and lofty promontories, that stretched far into the sea.

Through the centre of this rich vega the rock of Salobreña reared its rugged back, nearly dividing the plain, and advancing to the margin of the sea; with just a strip of sandy beach at its foot, laved by the blue waves of the Mediterranean.

The town covered the ridge and sides of the rocky hill, and was fortified by strong walls and towers; while on the highest and most precipitous part stood the citadel, a huge castle, that seemed to form a part of the living rock; the massive ruins of which, at the present day, attract the gaze of the traveller, as he winds his way far below, along the road which passes through the vega.

This important fortress had been intrusted to the command of Don Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, captain general of the artillery, and the most scientific of all the Spanish leaders. That experienced veteran, however, was with the king at Cordova, having left a valiant cavalier as alcayde of the place.

Boabdil el Chico had full information of the state of the garrison, and the absence of its commander. Putting himself at the head of a powerful force, therefore, he departed from Granada, and made a rapid march through the mountains; hoping, by this sudden movement, to seize upon Salobreña, before King Ferdinand could come to its assistance.

The inhabitants of Salobreña were Mudexares, or Moors who had sworn allegiance to

the Christians. Still, when they heard the sound of the Moorish drums and trumpets, and beheld the squadrons of their countrymen advancing across the vega, their hearts yearned towards the standard of their nation and their faith. A tumult arose in the place. The populace shouted the name of Boabdil el Chico, and, throwing open the gates, admitted him within the walls.

The Christian garrison was too few in number to contend for the possession of the town. They retreated to the citadel, and shut themselves up within its massive walls, which were considered impregnable. Here they maintained a desperate defence, hoping to hold out until succour should arrive from the neighbouring fortresses.

The tidings, that Salobreña was invested by the Moorish king, spread along the sea coast, and filled the Christians with alarm. Don Francisco Enriques, uncle of the king, commanded the city of Velez Malaga, about twelve leagues distant, but separated by ranges of those vast rocky mountains, which are piled along the Mediterranean, and tower in steep promontories and precipices above its waves.

Don Francisco summoned the alcaydes of his district, to hasten with him to the relief of this important fortress. A number of cavaliers and their retainers answered to his call; among whom was Fernando Perez del Pulgar, surnamed El de las Hazañas (he of the exploits); the same who had signalized himself in a foray, by elevating a handkerchief on a lance for a banner, and leading on his disheartened comrades to victory. As soon as Don Francisco beheld a little band collected round him, he set out with all speed for Salobreña. The march was rugged and severe; climbing and descending immense mountains, and sometimes winding along the edge of giddy precipices, with the surges of the sea raging far below. When Don Francisco arrived with his followers at the lofty promontory, that stretches along one side of the little vega of Salobreña, he looked down with sorrow and anxiety upon a Moorish army of great force, encamped at the foot of the fortress; while Moorish banners, on various parts of the walls, showed, that the town was already in possession of the infidels. A solitary Christian standard alone floated on the top of the

castle keep, indicating that the brave garrison were hemmed up in their rock-built citadel.

Don Francisco found it impossible, with his small force, to make any impression on the camp of the Moors, or to get to the relief of the castle. He stationed his little band upon a rocky height near the sea, where they were safe from the assaults of the enemy. The sight of his friendly banner, waving in their neighbourhood, cheered the heart of the garrison; and he conveyed to them assurance of speedy succour from the king. In the mean time, Fernando Perez del Pulgar, who always burned to distinguish himself by bold and striking exploits, in the course of a prowling expedition along the borders of the Moorish camp, remarked a postern gate of the castle opening upon the steep part of the rocky hill, which looked towards the mountains. A sudden thought flashed upon the daring mind of Pulgar. "Who will follow my banner," said he, "and make a dash for yonder postern?" A bold proposition, in time of warfare, never wants for bold spirits to accept it. Seventy resolute men immediately stepped forward. Pulgar put himself at their head. They cut

their way suddenly through a weak part of the camp, fought up to the gate, which was eagerly thrown open to receive them, and succeeded in effecting their entrance into the fortress, before the alarm of their attempt had spread through the Moorish army.

The garrison was roused to new spirit by this unlooked for reinforcement, and were enabled to make a more vigorous resistance. The Moors had intelligence, however, that there was a great scarcity of water in the castle; and they exulted in the idea, that this additional number of warriors would soon exhaust the cisterns, and compel them to surrender. When Pulgar heard of this hope entertained by the enemy, he caused a bucket of water to be lowered from the battlements, and threw a silver cup in bravado to the Moors.

The situation of the garrison, however, was daily growing more and more critical. They suffered greatly from thirst; while, to tantalize them in their sufferings, they beheld limpid streams winding in abundance through the green plain below them. They began to fear, that all succour would arrive to late; when one day they beheld a little squadron of

vessels far at sea, but standing towards the shore. There was some doubt at first, whether it might not be a hostile armament from Africa; but, as it approached, they descried, to their great joy, the banner of Castile.

It was a reinforcement, brought in all haste by the governor of the fortress, Don Francisco Ramirez. The squadron anchored at a steep rocky island, which rises from the very margin of the smooth sandy beach, directly in front of the rock of Salobreña, and stretches out into the sea. On this island Ramirez landed his men, and was as strongly posted as if in a fortress. His force was too scanty to attempt a battle; but he assisted to harass and distract the besiegers. Whenever King Boabdil made an attack upon the fortress, his camp was assailed, on one side by the troops of Ramirez, who landed from their island, and, on another, by those of Don Francisco Enriquez, who swept down from their rock; while Fernando del Pulgar kept up a fierce defence from every tower and battlement of the castle. The attention of the Moorish king was diverted, also, for a time, by an ineffectual attempt to relieve the little port of Adra, that

had recently declared in his favour, but had been recaptured for the Christians by Cidi Yahye and his son Alnayer. Thus the unlucky Boabdil, bewildered on every hand, lost all the advantage that he had gained by his rapid march from Granada. While he was yet besieging the obstinate citadel, tidings were brought him, that King Ferdinand was in full march, with a powerful host, to its assistance. There was no time for further delay. He made a furious attack, with all his forces, upon the castle, but was again repulsed by Pulgar and his coadjutors; when, abandoning the siege in despair, he retreated with his army, lest King Ferdinand should get between him and his capital. On his way back to Granada, however, he in some sort consoled himself for his late disappointment, by overrunning a part of the territories and possessions lately assigned to his uncle El Zagal, and to Cidi Yahye. He defeated their alcaydes, destroyed several of their fortresses, burnt their villages; and, leaving the country behind him, reeking and smoking with his vengeance, returned, with considerable booty, to repose himself within the walls of the Alhambra.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

How King Ferdinand treated the people of Guadix, and how El Zagal finished his royal career.

SCARCELY had Boabdil ensconced himself in his capital, when King Ferdinand, at the head of seven thousand horse, and twenty thousand foot, again appeared in the vega. He had set out in all haste from Cordova, to the relief of Salobreña; but hearing on his march, that the siege was raised, he turned with his army, to make a second ravage round the walls of devoted Granada. His present forage lasted fifteen days, in the course of which, every thing that had escaped his former desolating visit was so completely destroyed, that scarcely a green thing, or a living animal, was left on the face of the land. The Moors sallied frequently, and fought desperately in defence of their fields; but the work of destruction was accomplished, and Granada, once the queen of gardens, was left surrounded by a desert.

From hence Ferdinand marched to crush a conspiracy, which had lately manifested itself in the cities of Guadix, Baza, and Almeria. These recently conquered places had entered into secret correspondence with King Boabdil, inviting him to march to their gates, promising to rise upon the Christian garrisons, seize upon the citadels, and surrender themselves into his power. The Marquis of Villena had received notice of the conspiracy, and suddenly thrown himself, with a large force, into Guadix. Under pretence of making a review of the inhabitants, he made them sally forth into the fields before the city. When the whole Moorish population, capable of bearing arms, was thus without the walls, he ordered the gates to be closed. He then permitted them to enter two by two, and three by three, and to take forth their wives and children, and effects. The houseless Moors were fain to make themselves temporary hovels, in the gardens and orchards about the city. They were clamorous in their complaints at being thus excluded from their homes; but were told, they must wait with patience, until the charges against them could

be investigated, and the pleasure of the king be known *.

When Ferdinand arrived at Guadix, he found the unhappy Moors in their cabins, among the orchards. They complained bitterly of the deception that had been practised upon them, and implored permission to return into the city, and live peaceably in their dwellings, as had been promised them in their articles of capitulation.

King Ferdinand listened graciously to their complaints. "My friends," said he, in reply, "I am informed, that there has been a conspiracy among you, to kill my alcayde and garrison, and to take part with my enemy, the King of Granada. I shall make a thorough investigation of this conspiracy. Those among you, who shall be proved innocent, shall be restored to their dwellings; but the guilty shall incur the penalty of their offences. As I wish, however, to proceed with mercy as well as justice, I now give you your choice, either to depart at once, without further question, going wherever you please, and taking

* Zurita, l. xx. c. 85. Cura de los Palacios, c. 97.

with you your families and effects, under an assurance of safety, or to deliver up those who are guilty; not one of whom, I give you my word, shall escape punishment."

When the people of Guadix heard this, they communed among themselves, "and, as most of them," says the worthy Agapida, "were either culpable, or feared to be considered so, they accepted the alternative, and departed sorrowfully, they, and their wives, and their little ones." "Thus," in the words of that excellent and contemporary historian, Andres Bernaldes, commonly called the Curate of Los Palacios, "thus did the king deliver Guadix from the hands of the enemies of our holy faith, after seven hundred and seventy years, that it had been in their possession, even since the time of Roderick the Goth; and this was one of the mysteries of our Lord, who would not consent that the city should remain longer in power of the Moors." A pious and sage remark, which is quoted with peculiar approbation by the worthy Agapida.

King Ferdinand offered similar alternatives to the Moors of Baza, Almeria, and other

cities, accused of participation in this conspiracy; who generally preferred to abandon their homes, rather than incur the risk of an investigation. Most of them relinquished Spain, as a country where they could no longer live in security and independence, and departed with their families for Africa; such as remained were suffered to live in villages and hamlets, and other unwalled places *.

While Ferdinand was thus occupied at Guadix, dispensing justice and mercy, and receiving cities in exchange, the old monarch, Muley Abdalla, surnamed El Zagal, appeared before him. He was haggard with care, and almost crazed with passion. He had found his little territory of Andarax, and his two thousand subjects, as difficult to govern as had been the distracted kingdom of Granada. The charm, which had bound the Moors to him, was broken, when he appeared in arms under the banner of Ferdinand. He had returned from his inglorious campaign, with his petty army of two hundred men, followed by the executions of the people of Granada, and

* Garibay, lib. xiii. cap. 39. Pulgar, l. iii. c. 132.

the secret repining of those he had led into the field. No sooner had his subjects heard of the successes of Boabdil el Chico, than they seized their arms, assembled tumultuously, declared for the young monarch, threatening the life of El Zagal *. The unfortunate old king had with difficulty evaded their fury; and this last lesson seemed entirely to have cured him of his passion for sovereignty. He now entreated Ferdinand to purchase the towns and castles, and other possessions, which had been granted to him; offering them at a low rate, and begging safe passage, for himself and his followers, to Africa. King Ferdinand graciously complied with his wishes. He purchased of him three and twenty towns and villages, in the valleys of Andarax and Alhauren, for which he gave him five millions of maravedis. El Zagal relinquished his right to one half of the salinas, or saltpits, of Maleha, in favour of his brother in law, Cidi Yahye. Having thus disposed of his petty empire and possessions, he packed up all his treasure, of which he had a great amount,

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 97.

and, followed by many Moorish families, passed over to Africa*.

And here let us cast an eye beyond the present period of our chronicle, and trace the remaining career of El Zagal. His short and turbulent reign, and disastrous end, would afford a wholesome lesson to unprincipled ambition, were not all ambition of the kind fated to be blind to precept and example. When he arrived in Africa, instead of meeting with kindness and sympathy, he was seized and thrown in prison by the King of Fez, as though he had been his vassal. He was accused of being the cause of the dissensions and downfal of the kingdom of Granada, and the accusation being proved to the satisfaction of the King of Fez, he condemned the unhappy El Zagal to perpetual darkness. A basin of glowing copper was passed before his eyes, which effectually destroyed his sight. His wealth, which had probably been the secret cause of these cruel measures, was confiscated and seized upon by his oppressor, and El Zagal was thrust forth, blind, helpless, and

* Conde, part iv. cap. 41.

destitute, upon the world. In this wretched condition, the late Moorish monarch groped his way through the regions of Tingitania, until he reached the city of Velez de Gomera. The King of Velez had formerly been his ally, and felt some movement of compassion at his present altered and abject state. He gave him food and raiment, and suffered him to remain unmolested in his dominions. Death, which so often hurries off the prosperous and happy from the midst of untasted pleasures, spares, on the other hand, the miserable, to drain the last drop of his cup of bitterness. El Zagal dragged out a wretched existence of many years, in the city of Velez. He wandered about, blind and disconsolate, an object of mingled scorn and pity, and bearing above his raiment a parchment, on which was written in Arabic, "This is the unfortunate King of Andalusia *."

* Marmol de Rebelione Maur. lib. i. cap. 16. Pedraza Hist. Granat. p. iii. c. 4. Suarez, Hist. de Obispados de Guadiz y Baza, c. 10.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

Preparations of Granada for a desperate defence.

"How is thy strength departed, oh Granada! how is thy beauty withered and despoiled, oh city of groves and fountains! The commerce, that once thronged thy streets, is at an end; the merchant no longer hastens to thy gates, with the luxuries of foreign lands. The cities, which once paid thee tribute, are wrested from thy sway; the chivalry, which filled thy vivar-rambla with the sumptuous pageantry of war, have fallen in many battles. The Alhambra still rears its ruddy towers from the midst of groves; but melancholy reigns in its marble halls, and the monarch looks down from his lofty balconies upon a naked waste, where once had extended the blooming glories of the vega!"

Such is the lament of the Moorish writers, over the lamentable state of Granada, which remained a mere phantom of its former great-

ness. The two ravages of the vega, following so closely upon each other, had swept off all the produce of the year, and the husbandman had no longer the heart to till the field, seeing that the ripening harvest only brought the spoiler to his door.

During the winter season, King Ferdinand made diligent preparations for the last campaign, that was to decide the fate of Granada. As this war was waged purely for the promotion of the Christian faith, he thought it meet its enemies should bear the expenses. He levied, therefore, a general contribution upon all the Jews throughout his kingdom, by synagogues and districts, and obliged them to render in the proceeds at the city of Seville*.

On the 11th of April, Ferdinand and Isabella departed for the Moorish frontier, with the solemn determination to lay close siege to Granada, and never to quit its walls until they had planted the standard of the faith on the towers of the Alhambra. Many of the nobles of the kingdom, particularly those from the

* Garibay, lib. viii. cap. 39.

parts remote from the scene of action, wearied by the toils of war, and foreseeing, that this would be a tedious siege, requiring patience and vigilance, rather than hardy deeds of arms, were contented with sending their vassals, while they staid at home themselves, to attend to their domains. Many cities furnished soldiers at their cost, and the king took the field with an army of forty thousand infantry, and ten thousand horse. The principal captains, who followed him in this campaign, were Roderigo Ponce de Leon, the Marquis of Cadiz, the master of Santiago, the Marquis of Villena, the counts of Tendilla, Cifuentes, Cabra, and Ureña, and Don Alonzo de Aguilar.

Queen Isabella, accompanied by her son, the Prince Juan, and by the princesses Juana, Maria, and Cathalina, her daughters, proceeded to Alcala la Real, the mountain fortress and strong hold of the Count de Tendilla. Here she remained, to forward supplies to the army, and to be ready to repair to the camp, whenever her presence might be required.

The army of Ferdinand poured into the vega, by various defiles of the mountains, and

on the 23d of April, the royal tent was pitched at a village called Los Ojos de Huescar, about a league and a half from Granada. At the approach of this formidable force, the harassed inhabitants turned pale, and even many of the warriors trembled, for they felt, that the last desperate struggle was at hand.

Boabdil el Chico assembled his council in the Alhambra, from the windows of which they could behold the Christian squadrons, glistening through clouds of dust, as they poured along the vega. The utmost confusion and consternation reigned in the council. Many of the members, terrified with the horrors impending over their families, advised Boabdil to throw himself upon the generosity of the Christian monarch; even several of the bravest suggested the possibility of obtaining honourable terms.

The wazir of the city, Abul Casim Abdelmelia, was called upon to report the state of the public means, for sustenance and defence. There were sufficient provisions, he said, for a few months' supply, independent of what might exist in the possession of merchants, and other rich inhabitants. "But of what

avail, "said he, " is a temporary provision against the sieges of the Castilian monarch, which are interminable?"

He produced, also, the lists of men capable of bearing arms. " The number," said he, " is great; but what can be expected from mere citizen soldiers? They vaunt and menace in time of safety. None are so arrogant when the enemy is at a distance; but when the din of war thunders at their gates, they hide themselves in terror."

When Muza heard these words, he rose with generous warmth. " What reason have we," said he, "to despair? The blood of those illustrious Moors, the ancient conquerors of Spain, still flows in our veins. Let us be true to ourselves, and fortune will again be with us. We have a veteran force, both horse and foot, the flower of our chivalry; seasoned in war, and scarred in a thousand battles. As to the multitude of our citizens, spoken of so slightly, why should we doubt their valour? There are twenty thousand young men, in the fire of youth, for whom I will engage, that, in the defence of their homes, they will rival the most hardy veterans. Do we want

provisions? Our horses are fleet, and our horsemen daring in foray. Let them scour and scourge the country of those apostate Moslems, who have surrendered to the Christians. Let them make inroads into the lands of our enemies. We shall soon see them returning with cavalgadas to our gates; and to a soldier, there is no morsel so sweet as that wrested with hard fighting from the foe."

Boabdil el Chico, though he wanted firm and durable courage, was readily excited to sudden emotions of bravery. He caught a glow of resolution from the noble ardour of Muza. "Do what is needful," said he to his commanders: "into your hands I confide the common safety. You are the protectors of the kingdom; and, with the aid of Allah, will revenge the insults of our religion, the deaths of our friends and relations, and the sorrows and sufferings heaped upon our land *."

To every one was now assigned his separate duty. The wazir had charge of the arms and provisions, and the enrolling of the people. Muza was to command the cavalry, to defend

* Conde.

the gates, and to take the lead in all sallies and skirmishes. Naim Reduan and Mohammed Aben Zayda were his adjutants; Abdel Kerim Zegri, and the other captains, were to guard the walls; and the alcaydes of the alcazaba, and of the red towers, had command of the fortresses.

Nothing now was heard but the din of arms, and the bustle of preparation. The Moorish spirit, quick to catch fire, was immediately in a flame; and the populace, in the excitement of the moment, set at naught the power of the Christians. Muza was in all parts of the city, infusing his own generous zeal into the bosoms of the soldiery. The young cavaliers rallied round him as their model; the veteran warriors regarded him with a soldier's admiration; the vulgar throng followed him with shouts; and the helpless part of the inhabitants, the old men and the women, hailed him with blessings as their protector.

On the first appearance of the Christian army, the principal gates of the city had been closed, and secured with bars, and bolts, and heavy chains. Mura now ordered them to be thrown open. "To me and my cavaliers," said

he, "is intrusted the defence of the gates: our bodies shall be their barriers." He stationed at each gate a strong guard, chosen from his bravest men. His horsemen were always completely armed, and ready to mount at a moment's warning. Their steeds stood saddled and caparisoned in the stables, with lance and buckler beside them. On the least approach of the enemy, a squadron of horse gathered within the gate, ready to dart forth like the bolt from the thunder cloud. Muza made no empty bravado, or haughty threat: he was more terrible in deeds than in words; and executed daring exploits, beyond even the vaunt of the vainglorious. Such was the present champion of the Moors. Had they possessed many such warriors, or had Muza risen to power at an earlier period of the war, the fate of Granada might have been deferred, and the Moor, for a long time, have maintained his throne within the walls of the Alhambra.

CHAPTER XC.

How King Ferdinand conducted the siege cautiously, and how Queen Isabella arrived at the camp.

Though Granada was shorn of its glories, and nearly cut off from all external aid, still its mighty castles and massive bulwarks seemed to set all attack at defiance. Being the last retreat of Moorish power, it had assembled within its walls the remnants of the armies that had contended, step by step, with the invaders, in their gradual conquest of the land. All that remained of high born and high bred chivalry was here. All that was loyal and patriotic was roused to activity by the common danger; and Granada, that had so long been lulled into inaction by vain hopes of security, now assumed a formidable aspect in the hour of its despair.

Ferdinand saw, that any attempt to subdue the city by main force would be perilous and bloody. Cautious in his policy, and fond of

conquests gained by art rather than by valour, he resorted to the plan, which had been so successful with Baza, and determined to reduce the place by famine. For this purpose, his armies penetrated into the very heart of the Alpuxarras; andravaged the valleys, and sacked and burned the towns upon which the city depended for its supplies. Scouting parties, also, ranged the mountains behind Granada, and captured every casual convoy of provisions. The Moors became more daring as their situation became more hopeless. Never had Ferdinand experienced such vigorous sallies and assaults. Muza, at the head of his cavalry, harassed the borders of the camp, and even penetrated into the interior, making sudden spoil and ravage, and leaving his course to be traced by the wounded and slain. To protect his camp from these assaults, Ferdinand fortified it with deep trenches and strong bulwarks. It was of a quadrangular form, divided into streets, like a city, the troops being quartered in tents, and in booths, constructed of bushes and branches of trees. When it was completed, Queen Isabella came in state, with all her court, and the prince and princesses, to be present at

the siege. This was intended, as on former occasions, to reduce the besieged to despair, by showing the determination of the sovereigns to reside in the camp until the city should surrender. Immediately after her arrival, the queen rode forth, to survey the camp and its environs. Wherever she went, she was attended by a splendid retinue; and all the commanders vied with each other in the pomp and ceremony with which they received her. Nothing was heard, from morning until night, but shouts and acclamations, and bursts of martial music; so that it appeared to the Moors as if a continual festival and triumph reigned in the Christian camp.

The arrival of the queen, however, and the menaced obstinacy of the siege, had no effect in damping the fire of the Moorish chivalry. Muza inspired the youthful warriors with the most devoted heroism. "We have nothing left to fight for," said he, "but the ground we stand on: when this is lost, we cease to have a country and a name."

Finding the Christian king forbore to make an attack, Muza incited his cavaliers to challenge the youthful chivalry of the Christian

army to single combat, or partial skirmishes. Scarcely a day passed without gallant conflicts of the kind, in sight of the city and the camp. The combatants rivalled each other in the splendour of their armour and array, as well as in the prowess of their deeds. Their contests were more like the stately ceremonials of tilts and tournaments, than the rude combats of the field. Ferdinand soon perceived, that they animated the fiery Moors with fresh zeal and courage, while they cost the lives of many of his bravest cavaliers: he again, therefore, forbade the acceptance of any individual challenges; and ordered, that all partial encounters should be avoided. The cool and stern policy of the catholic sovereign bore hard upon the generous spirits of either army; but roused the indignation of the Moors, when they found they were to be subdued in this inglorious manner. "Of what avail," said they, "is chivalry and heroic valour? the crafty monarch of the Christians has no magnanimity in warfare: he seeks to subdue us through the weakness of our bodies, but shuns to encounter the courage of our souls!"

CHAPTER XCI.

Of the insolent defiance of Tarfe, the Moor, and the daring exploit of Fernando Perez del Pulgar.

When the Moorish knights beheld, that all courteous challenges were unavailing, they sought various means to provoke the Christian warriors to the field. Sometimes a body of them, fleetly mounted, would gallop up to the skirts of the camp, and try who should hurl his lance farthest within the barriers; leaving his name inscribed on it, or a label affixed to it, containing some taunting defiance. These bravadoes caused great irritation; but still the Spanish warriors were restrained by the prohibition of the king.

Among the Moorish cavaliers was one named Tarfe, renowned for his great strength and daring spirit; but whose courage partook of fierce audacity rather than chivalric heroism. In one of these sallies, when they were skirting the Christian camp, this arrogant

Moor outstripped his companions, overleaped the barriers, and, galloping close to the royal quarters, lanched his lance so far within, that it remained quivering in the earth, close by the pavilions of the sovereigns. The royal guards rushed forth in pursuit; but the Moorish horsemen were already beyond the camp, and scouring in a cloud of dust for the city. Upon wresting the lance from the earth, a label was found upon it, importing, that it was intended for the queen.

Nothing could equal the indignation of the Christian warriors at the insolence of the bravado, when they heard to whom the discourteous insult was offered. Fernando Perez del Pulgar, surnamed "he of the exploits," was present, and resolved not to be outbraved by this daring infidel. "Who will stand by me," said he, "in an enterprise of desperate peril?" The Christian cavaliers well knew the harebrained valour of del Pulgar; yet not one hesitated to step forward. He chose fifteen companions, all men of powerful arm and dauntless heart. In the dead of the night he led them forth from the camp, and approached the city cautiously, until he arrived

at a postern gate, which opened upon the Darro, and was guarded by foot soldiers. The guards, little thinking of such an unwonted and partial attack, were for the most part asleep. The gate was forced, and a confused and chance-medley skirmish ensued. Fernando del Pulgar stopped not to take part in the affray. Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped furiously through the streets, striking fire out of the stones at every bound. Arrived at the principal mosque, he sprang from his horse, and, kneeling at the portal, took possession of the edifice as a Christian chapel, dedicating it to the blessed Virgin. In testimony of the ceremony, he took a tablet, which he had brought with him, on which was inscribed in large letters, "AVE MARIA," and nailed it to the door of the mosque with his dagger. This done, he remounted his steed, and galloped back to the gate. The alarm had been given; the city was in an uproar; soldiers were gathering from every direction. They were astonished at seeing a Christian warrior speeding from the interior of the city. Fernando del Pulgar, overturning some, and cutting down others, rejoined his com-

panions, who still maintained possession of the gate, by dint of hard fighting, and they all made good their retreat to the camp. The Moors were at a loss to conjecture the meaning of this wild and apparently fruitless assault; but great was their exasperation, when, on the following day, they discovered the trophy of hardihood and prowess, the AVE MARIA, thus elevated in the very centre of the city. The mosque, thus boldly sanctified by Fernando del Pulgar, was eventually, after the capture of Granada, converted into a cathedral*.

* In commemoration of this daring feat, the Emperor Charles V., in after years, conferred on Pulgar and his descendants the right of sepulture in that church, and the privilege of sitting in the choir during high mass. This Fernando Perez del Pulgar was a man of letters, as well as arms; and inscribed to Charles V. a summary of the achievements of Gonsalvo of Cordova, surnamed the Great Captain, who had been one of his comrades in arms. He is often confounded with Fernando del Pulgar, historian and secretary to Queen Isabella. See note to Pulgar's Chron. of the Catholic Sovereigns, part iii. c. 3. edit. Valencia, 1780.

CHAPTER XCII.

How Queen Isabella took a view of the city of Granada; and how her curiosity cost the lives of many Christians and Moors.

THE royal encampment lay at such a distance from Granada, that the general aspect of the city only could be seen, as it rose gracefully from the vega, covering the sides of the hills with palaces and towers. Queen Isabella had expressed an earnest desire to behold, nearer at hand, a place, the beauty of which was so renowned throughout the world; and the Marquis of Cadiz, with his accustomed courtesy, prepared a great military escort and guard, to protect his consort and the ladies of the court, while they enjoyed this perilous gratification.

It was on the morning after the event recorded in the preceding chapter, that a magnificent and powerful train issued forth from the Christian camp. The advanced guard was composed of legions of cavalry,

heavily armed, that looked like moving masses of polished steel. Then came the king and queen, with the prince and princesses, and the ladies of the court, surrounded by the royal body guard, sumptuously arrayed, composed of the sons of the most illustrious houses of Spain. After these was the rear guard, composed of a powerful force of horse and foot; for the flower of the army sallied forth that day. The Moors gazed with fearful admiration at this glorious pageant, wherein the pomp of the court was mingled with the terrors of the camp. It moved along in a radiant line across the vega, to the melodious thunders of martial music; while banner, and plume, and silken scarf, and rich brocade, gave a gay and gorgeous relief to the grim visage of iron war that lurked beneath.

The army moved towards the hamlet of Zubia, built on the skirts of the mountains, to the left of Granada, and commanding a view of the Alhambra, and the most beautiful quarter of the city. As they approached the hamlet, the Marquis of Villena, the Count Ureña, and Don Alonzo de Aguilar, filed off with their battalions, and were soon seen

glittering along the side of the mountain above the village. In the mean time, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Count de Tendilla, the Count de Cabra, and Don Alonzo Fernandez, senior of Alcandrete and Montemayor, drew up their forces in battle array on the plain below the hamlet, presenting a living barrier of loyal chivalry, between the sovereigns and the city. Thus securely guarded, the royal party alighted, and entering one of the houses of the hamlet, which had been prepared for their reception, enjoyed a full view of the city from its terraced roof. The ladies of the court gazed with delight at the red towers of the Alhambra, rising from amidst shady groves, anticipating the time when the Catholic sovereigns should be enthroned within its walls, and its courts shine with the splendour of Spanish chivalry. "The reverend prelates and holy friars, who always surrounded the queen, looked with serene satisfaction," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "at this modern Babylon; enjoying the triumph that awaited them, when those mosques and minarets should be converted into churches, and goodly priests and bishops should succeed to the infidel alfaquis."

When the Moors beheld the Christians thus drawn forth in full array in the plain, they supposed it was to offer them battle, and they hesitated not to accept it. In a little while, the queen beheld a body of Moorish cavalry pouring into the vega, the riders managing their fleet and fiery steeds with admirable address. They were richly armed, and clothed in the most brilliant colours, and the caparisons of their steeds flamed with gold and embroidery. This was the favourite squadron of Muza, composed of the flower of the youthful cavaliers of Granada: others succeeded; some heavily armed, some *a la genete*, with lance and buckler, and lastly came the legions of foot soldiers, with arquebuse and crossbow, and spear and cimeter.

When the queen saw the army issuing from the city, she sent to the Marquis of Cadiz, and forbade any attack upon the enemy, or the acceptance of any challenge to a skirmish; for she was loth, that her curiosity should cost the life of a single human being.

The marquis promised to obey, though sorely against his will; and it grieved the spirit of the Spanish cavaliers to be obliged to re-

main with sheathed swords, while bearded by the foe. The Moors could not comprehend the meaning of this inaction of the Christians, after having apparently invited a battle. They sallied several times from their ranks, and approached near enough to discharge their arrows, but the Christians were immovable. Many of the Moorish horsemen galloped close to the Christian ranks, brandishing their lances and cimeters, and defying various cavaliers to single combat: but King Ferdinand had rigorously prohibited all duels of the kind, and they dared not transgress his orders under his very eye.

While this grim and reluctant tranquillity prevailed along the Christian line, there rose a mingled shout and sound of laughter, near the gate of the city. A Moorish horseman, armed at all points, issued forth, followed by a rabble, who drew back as he approached the scene of danger. The Moor was more robust and brawny than was common with his countrymen. His visor was closed; he bore a large buckler and ponderous lance; his cimeter was of a Damascus blade, and his richly ornamented dagger was wrought by an artificer of

Fez. He was known by his device to be Tarfe, the most insolent, yet valiant, of the Moslem warriors; the same who had hurled into the royal camp his lance, inscribed to the queen. As he rode slowly along in front of the army, his very steed, prancing with fiery eye and distended nostril, seemed to breathe defiance to the Christians. But what were the feelings of the Spanish cavaliers, when they beheld, tied to the tail of his steed, and dragged in the dust, the very inscription, *Ave Maria*, which Fernando Perez del Pulgar had affixed to the door of the mosque! A burst of horror and indignation broke forth from the army. Fernando del Pulgar was not at hand to maintain his previous achievement, but one of his young companions in arms, Garcilasso de la Vega by name, putting spurs to his horse, galloped to the hamlet of Zubia, threw himself on his knees before the king, and besought permission to accept the defiance of this insolent infidel, and to revenge the insult offered to our blessed Lady. The request was too pious to be refused: Garcilasso remounted his steed; he closed his helmet, graced by four sable plumes; grasped

his buckler, of Flemish workmanship, and his lance, of matchless temper, and defied the haughty Moor in the midst of his career. A combat took place, in view of the two armies, and of the Castilian court. The Moor was powerful in wielding his weapons, and dexterous in managing his steed. He was of larger frame than Garcilasso, and more completely armed; and the Christians trembled for their champion. The shock of their encounter was dreadful; their lances were shivered, and sent up splinters in the air. Garcilasso was thrown back in his saddle, and his horse made a wide career before he could recover his position, gather up the reins, and return to the conflict. They now encountered each other with swords. The Moor circled round his opponent as a hawk circles when about to make a swoop; his Arabian steed obeyed his rider with matchless quickness; at every attack of the infidel, it seemed as if the Christian knight must sink beneath his flashing cimeter. But if Garcilasso were inferior to him in power, he was superior in agility; many of his blows he parried, others he received on his Flemish

buckler, which was proof against the Damascus blade. The blood streamed from numerous wounds, received by either warrior. The Moor, seeing his antagonist exhausted, availed himself of his superior force; and, grappling, endeavoured to wrest him from his saddle. They both fell to earth; the Moor placed his knee on the breast of his victim, and, brandishing his dagger, aimed a blow at his throat. A cry of despair was uttered by the Christian warriors, when suddenly they beheld the Moor rolling lifeless in the dust! Garcilasso had shortened his sword, and, as his adversary raised his arm to strike, had pierced him to the heart. "It was a singular and miraculous victory," says Fray Antonio Agapida; "but the Christian knight was armed by the sacred nature of his cause, and the holy Virgin gave him strength, like another David, to slay this gigantic champion of the Gentiles."

The laws of chivalry were observed throughout the combat; no one interfered on either side. Garcilasso now despoiled his adversary; then, rescuing the holy inscription of "Ave Maria" from its degrading situation, he ele-

vated it on the point of his sword, and bore it off as a signal of triumph, amidst the rapturous shouts of the Christian army.

The sun had now reached the meridian, and the hot blood of the Moors was inflamed by its rays, and by the sight of the defeat of their champion. Muza ordered two pieces of ordnance to open a fire upon the Christians. A confusion was produced in one part of their ranks. Muza called the chiefs of the army: "Let us waste no more time in empty challenges, let us charge upon the enemy: he who assaults has always an advantage in the combat." So saying, he rushed forward, followed by a large body of horse and foot, and charged so furiously upon the advance guard of the Christians, that he drove it in upon the battalion of the Marquis of Cadiz. The gallant marquis now considered himself absolved from all further obedience to the queen's commands. He gave the signal to attack. "Santiago!" was shouted along the line, and he pressed forward to the encounter, with his battalion of twelve hundred lances. The other cavaliers followed his example, and the battle instantly became general.

When the king and queen beheld the armies thus rushing to the combat, they threw themselves on their knees, and implored the holy Virgin to protect her faithful warriors. The prince and princess, the ladies of the court, and the prelates and friars who were present, did the same; and the effect of the prayers of these illustrious and saintly persons was immediately apparent. The fierceness with which the Moors had rushed to the attack was suddenly cooled; they were bold and adroit for a skirmish, but unequal to the veteran Spaniards in the open field. A panic seized upon the foot soldiers; they turned, and took to flight. Muza and his cavaliers in vain endeavoured to rally them. Some sought refuge in the mountains; but the greater part fled to the city, in such confusion, that they overturned and trampled upon each other. The Christians pursued them to the very gates. Upwards of two thousand were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, and the two pieces of ordnance were brought off, as trophies of the victory. Not a Christian lance but was bathed that day in the blood of an infidel*.

* Cura de los Palacios.

Such was the brief but sanguinary action, which was known among the Christian warriors by the name of the Queen's Skirmish; for when the Marquis of Cadiz waited upon her majesty, to apologize for breaking her commands, he attributed the victory entirely to her presence. The queen, however, insisted, that all was owing to her troops being led on by so valiant a commander. Her majesty had not yet recovered from her agitation at beholding so terrible a scene of bloodshed; though certain veterans present pronounced it as gay and gentle a fight as they had ever witnessed.

To commemorate this victory, the queen afterwards erected a monastery in the village of Zubia, dedicated to St. Francisco; which still exists, and in its garden is a laurel planted by the hands of her majesty*.

* The house, from whence the king and queen contemplated the battle, is likewise to be seen at the present day. It is in the first street, to the right, on entering the village from the vega, and the royal arms are painted on the ceilings. It is inhabited by a worthy farmer, Francisco Garcia, who, in showing the house, refuses all compensation,

with true Spanish pride; offering, on the contrary, the hospitalities of his mansion to the stranger. His children are versed in the old Spanish ballads about the exploits of Hernando Perez del Pulgar and Garcilasso de la Vega.

CHAPTER XCIII.

Conflagration of the Christian camp.

The ravages of war had as yet spared a little portion of the vega of Granada. A green belt of gardens and orchards still flourished round the city, extending along the banks of the Xenil and the Darro. They had been the solace and delight of the inhabitants in their happier days, and contributed to their sustenance in this time of scarcity. Ferdinand determined to make a final and exterminating ravage to the very walls of the city, so that there should not remain a single green thing for the sustenance of man or beast. The evening of a hot July day shone splendidly upon the Christian camp, which was in a bustle of preparation for the next day's service; for desperate resistance was expected from the Moors. The camp made a glorious appearance in the setting sun. The warriors' tents of the royal family and the attendant nobles were adorned

with rich hangings, having sumptuous devices, and with costly furniture; forming, as it were, a little city of silk and brocade, where the pinnacles of pavilions of various gay colours, surmounted with waving standards and fluttering pennons, might vie with the domes and minarets of the capital they were besieging.

In the midst of this gaudy metropolis, the lofty tent of the queen domineered over the rest like a stately palace. The Marquis of Cadiz had courteously surrendered his own tent to the queen. It was the most complete and splendid in Christendom, and had been carried about with him throughout the war. In the centre rose a stately alfaneque, or pavilion, in oriental taste, the rich hangings being supported by columns of lances, ornamented with martial devices. This centre pavilion, or silken tower, was surrounded by other compartments, some of painted linen, lined with silk, and all separated from each other by curtains. It was one of those camp palaces, which are raised and demolished in an instant, like the city of canvas that surrounds them.

As the evening advanced, the bustle in the camp subsided. Every one sought repose, pre-

paratory to the next day's toil. The king retired early, that he might be up with the crowing of the cock, to head the destroying army in person. All stir of military preparation was hushed in the royal quarters; the very sound of minstrelsy was mute; and not the tinkling of a guitar was to be heard from the tents of the fair ladies of the court.

The queen had retired to the innermost part of her pavilion, where she was performing her orisons before a private altar. Perhaps the peril, to which the king might be exposed in the next day's foray, inspired her with more than usual devotion. While thus at her prayers, she was suddenly aroused by a glare of light, and wreaths of suffocating smoke. In an instant, the whole tent was in a blaze: there was a high gusty wind, which whirled the light flames from tent to tent, and speedily wrapped them all in one conflagration.

Isabella had barely time to save herself by instant flight. Her first thought, on being extricated from her tent, was for the safety of the king. She rushed to his tent; but the vigilant Ferdinand was already at the entrance of it. Starting from bed on the first alarm,

and fancying it an assault of the enemy, he had seized his sword and buckler, and sallied forth undressed, with his cuirass upon his arm.

The late so gorgeous camp was now a scene of wild confusion. The flames kept spreading from one pavilion to another, glaring upon the rich armour and golden and silver vessels, which seemed melting in the fervent heat. Many of the soldiery had erected booths and bowers of branches, which, being dry, crackled and blazed, and added to the rapid conflagration. The ladies of the court fled, shrieking and half-dressed, from their tents. There was an alarm of drum and trumpet, and a distracted hurry about the camp, of men half armed.

The Prince Juan had been snatched out of bed by an attendant, and conveyed to the quarters of the Count de Cabra, which were at the entrance of the camp. The loyal count immediately summoned his people, and those of his cousin, Don Alonzo de Montemayor, and formed a guard round the tent in which the prince was sheltered.

The idea, that this was a stratagem of the Moors, soon subsided; but it was feared, that they might take advantage of it to commence an

assault. The Marquis of Cadiz, therefore, sallied forth with three thousand horse, to check any advance from the city. As they passed along, it was one entire scene of hurry and consternation; some hastening to their posts at the call of drum and trumpet, some attempting to save rich effects and glittering armour, others dragging along terrified and restive horses.

When they emerged from the camp, they found the whole firmament illumined. The flames whirled up in long light spires; and the air was filled with sparks and cinders. A bright glare was thrown upon the city, revealing every battlement and tower. Turbaned heads were seen gazing from every roof, and armour gleamed along the walls; yet not a single warrior sallied from the gates. The Moors suspected some stratagem on the part of the Christians, and kept quietly within their walls. By degrees the flames expired, the city faded from sight, all again became dark and quiet, and the Marquis of Cadiz returned with his cavalry to the camp.

CHAPTER XCIV.

The last ravage before Granada.

When the day dawned on the Christian camp, nothing remained of that beautiful assemblage of stately pavilions, but heaps of smouldering rubbish, with helms, and corslets, and other furniture of war, and masses of melted gold and silver glittering among the ashes. The wardrobe of the queen was entirely destroyed; and there was an immense loss in plate, jewels, costly stuffs, and sumptuous armour of the luxurious nobles. The fire at first had been attributed to treachery, but, on investigation, it was proved to be entirely accidental. The queen, on retiring to her prayers, had ordered her lady in attendance to remove a light, burning near her couch, lest it should prevent her sleeping. Through heedlessness, the taper was placed in another part of the tent, near the hangings, which, being blown against it by a gust of wind, immediately took fire.

The wary Ferdinand knew the sanguine temperament of the Moors, and hastened to prevent their deriving confidence from the night's disaster. At break of day, the drums and trumpets sounded to arms; and the Christian army issued from among the smoking ruins of their camp in shining squadrons, with flaunting banners, and bursts of martial melodies, as though the preceding night had been a time of high festivity, instead of terror.

The Moors had beheld the conflagration with wonder and perplexity. When the day broke, and they looked towards the Christian camp, they saw nothing but a dark smoking mass. Their scouts came in with the joyful intelligence, that the whole camp was a scene of ruin. Scarce had the tidings spread throughout the city, than they beheld the Christian army advancing towards the walls. They considered it a feint to cover their desperate situation, and prepare for a retreat. Boabdil el Chico had one of his impulses of valour; he determined to take the field in person, and to follow up this signal blow, which Allah had inflicted on the enemy.

The Christian army approached close to the city, and were laying waste the gardens and orchards, when Boabdil sallied forth, surrounded by all that was left of the flower and chivalry of Granada. There is one place, where even the coward becomes brave; that sacred spot called home. What, then, must have been the valour of the Moors, a people always of fiery spirit, when the war was thus brought to their thresholds? They fought among the scenes of their loves and pleasures, the scenes of their infancy, and the haunts of their domestic life. They fought under the eyes of their wives and children, their old men and their maidens, of all that was helpless and all that was dear to them; for all Granada crowded on tower and battlement, watching with trembling heart the fate of this eventful day.

It was not so much one battle as a variety of battles. Every garden and orchard became a scene of deadly contest; every inch of ground was disputed by the Moors with an agony of grief and valour. Every inch of ground that the Christians advanced, they

valiantly maintained; but never did they advance with severer fighting, or greater loss of blood.

The cavalry of Muza was in every part of the field. Wherever it came, it gave fresh ardour to the fight. The Moorish soldier, fainting with heat, fatigue, and wounds, was roused to new life at the approach of Muza; and even he, who lay gasping in the agonies of death, turned his face towards him, and faintly uttered cheers and blessings as he passed.

The Christians had by this time gained possession of various towers near the city, from whence they had been annoyed by crossbows and arquebuses. The Moors, scattered in various actions, were severely pressed. Boabdil, at the head of the cavaliers of his guard, displayed the utmost valour; mingling in the fight, in various parts of the field, and endeavouring to inspirit the foot soldiers to the combat. But the Moorish infantry was never to be depended upon. In the heat of the action a panic seized upon them. They fled; leaving their sovereign exposed, with his handful of cavaliers, to an overwhelming force. Boabdil was on the point of falling

into the hands of the Christians; when, wheeling round, with his followers, they all threw the reins on the necks of their fleet steeds, and took refuge, by dint of hoof, within the walls of the city *.

Muza endeavoured to retrieve the fortune of the field. He threw himself before the retreating infantry; calling upon them to turn, and fight for their homes, their families, for every thing that was sacred and dear to them. It was all in vain. They were totally broken and dismayed, and fled tumultuously for the gates. Muza would fain have kept the field with his cavalry; but this devoted band, having stood the brunt of war throughout this desperate campaign, was fearfully reduced in number, and many of the survivors were crippled and enfeebled by their wounds. Slowly and reluctantly he retreated to the city, his bosom swelling with indignation and despair. When he entered the gates, he ordered them to be closed, and secured with bolts and bars; for he refused to place any further confidence in the archers and arquebusiers, who

* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 88.

were stationed to defend them; and he vowed never more to sally forth with foot soldiers to the field.

In the mean time, the artillery thundered from the walls, and checked all further advances of the Christians. King Ferdinand, therefore, called off his troops, and returned in triumph to the ruins of his camp; leaving the beautiful city of Granada wrapped in the smoke of her fields and gardens, and surrounded by the bodies of her slaughtered children.

Such was the last sally, made by the Moors, in defence of their favourite city. The French ambassador, who witnessed it, was filled with wonder at the prowess, the dexterity, and daring, of the Moslems. In truth, this whole war was an instance, memorable in history, of the most persevering resolution. For nearly ten years had the war endured, exhibiting an almost uninterrupted series of disasters to the Moorish arms. Their towns had been taken one after another, and their brethren slain, or led into captivity. Yet they disputed every city, and town, and fortress, and castle; nay, every rock itself, as if they had been inspirited by

victories. Wherever they could plant foot to fight, or find wall or cliff from whence to lanch an arrow, they disputed their beloved country; and now, when their capital was cut off from all relief, and had a whole nation thundering at its gates, they still maintained defence, as if they hoped some miracle to interpose in their behalf. "Their obstinate resistance," says an ancient chronicler, "shows the grief with which the Moors yielded up the vega, which was to them a paradise and heaven. Exerting all the strength of their arms, they embraced, as it were, that most beloved soil, from which neither wounds, nor defeats, nor death itself, could part them. They stood firm, battling for it with the united force of love and grief; never drawing back the foot, while they had hands to fight, or fortune to befriend them *."

* Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, rey xxx. c. 3.

CHAPTER XCV.

Building of the city of Santa Fé. Despair of the Moors.

The Moors now shut themselves up gloomily within their walls. There were no longer any daring sallies from their gates; and even the martial clangour of the drum and trumpet, which had continually resounded within that warrior city, was now seldom heard from its battlements. For a time they flattered themselves with hopes, that the late conflagration of the camp would discourage the besiegers; that, as in former years, their invasion would end with the summer, and that they would again withdraw before the autumnal rains. The measures of Ferdinand and Isabella soon crushed these hopes. They gave orders to build a regular city upon the site of their camp, to convince the Moors, that the siege was to endure until the surrender of Granada. Nine of the principal cities of Spain were charged with this stupendous undertaking,

and they emulated each other with a zeal worthy of the cause. "It verily seemed," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "as though some miracle operated to aid this pious work, so rapidly did arise a formidable city, with solid edifices, and powerful walls, and mighty towers, where lately had been seen nothing but tents and light pavilions. The city was traversed by two principal streets, in form of a cross, terminating in four gates, facing the four winds; and in the centre was a vast square, where the whole army might be assembled. To this city it was proposed to give the name of Isabella, so dear to the army and the nation; but that pious princess," adds Antonio Agapida, "calling to mind the holy cause in which it was erected, gave it the name of Santa Fé, or the city of the Holy Faith, and it remains to this day, a monument of the piety and glory of the catholic sovereigns."

Hither the merchants soon resorted from all points. Long trains of mules were seen every day entering and departing from its gates; the streets were crowded with magazines filled with all kinds of costly and luxurious merchandise; a scene of bustling commerce

and prosperity took place, while unhappy Granada remained shut up and desolate.

In the mean time the besieged city began to suffer the distress of famine. Its supplies were all cut off. A cavalgada of flocks and herds, and mules laden with money, coming to the relief of the city from the mountains of the Alpuxarras, was taken by the Marquis of Cadiz, and led in triumph to the camp, in sight of the suffering Moors. Autumn arrived; but the harvests had been swept from the face of the country; a rigorous winter was approaching, and the city was almost destitute of provisions. The people sank into deep despondency. They called to mind all that had been predicted by astrologers, at the birth of their ill-starred sovereign, and all that had been foretold of the fate of Granada, at the time of the capture of Zahara.

Boabdil was alarmed by the gathering dangers from without, and by the clamours of his starving people. He summoned a council, composed of the principal officers of the army, the alcaydes of the fortresses, the xeques, or sages of the city, and the alfaquis, or doctors of the faith. They assembled in the great

hall of audience of the Alhambra, and despair was painted in their countenances. Boabdil demanded of them what was to be done in their present extremity; and their answer was, "Surrender." The venerable Abal Cazim Abdelmelic, governor of the city, represented its unhappy state. "Our granaries are nearly exhausted, and no further supplies are to be expected. The provender for the war horses is required as sustenance for the soldiery; the very horses themselves are killed for food. Of seven thousand steeds, which once could be sent into the field, three hundred only remain. Our city contains two hundred thousand inhabitants, old and young, with each a mouth that calls piteously for bread."

The xeques and principal citizens declared, that the people could no longer sustain the labours and sufferings of a defence: "And of what avail is our defence," said they, "when the enemy is determined to persist in the siege? what alternative remains, but to surrender, or to die?"

The heart of Boabdil was touched by this appeal, and he maintained a gloomy silence. He had cherished some faint hope of relief

from the Soldan of Egypt, or the Barbary powers; but it was now at an end. Even if such assistance were to be sent, he had no longer a seaport where it might debark. The counsellors saw, that the resolution of the king was shaken, and they united their voices in urging him to capitulate.

The valiant Muza alone arose in opposition. "It is yet too early," said he, "to talk of a surrender. Our means are not exhausted; we have yet one source of strength remaining, terrible in its effects, and which often has achieved the most signal victory. It is our despair. Let us rouse the mass of the people; let us put weapons in their hands; let us fight the enemy to the very utmost, until we rush upon the points of their lances. I am ready to lead the way into the thickest of their squadrons; and much rather would I be numbered among those who fell in the defence of Granada, than of those who survived to capitulate for her surrender!"

The words of Muza were without effect, for they were addressed to broken spirited and heartless men, or men perhaps to whom sad experience had taught discretion. They

were arrived at that state of public depression, when heroes and heroism are no longer regarded, and when old men and their counsels rise into importance. Boabdil el Chico yielded to the general voice. It was determined to capitulate with the Christian sovereigns, and the venerable Abal Cazim Abdelmelic was sent forth to the camp, empowered to treat for terms.

CHAPTER XCVI.

Capitulation of Granada.

The old governor, Abal Cazim Abdelmelic, was received with great distinction by Ferdinand and Isabella, who appointed Gonzalvo of Cordova, and Fernando de Zafra, secretary to the king, to confer with him. All Granada awaited in trembling anxiety the result of his negotiations. After repeated conferences, he at length returned with the ultimate terms of the catholic sovereigns. They agreed to suspend all attack for seventy days, at the end of which time, if no succour should have arrived to the Moorish king, the city of Granada was to be surrendered.

All Christian captives were to be liberated without ransom.

Boabdil and his principal cavaliers were to take an oath of fealty to the Castilian crown; and certain valuable territories in the Alpuxarras mountains were to be assigned to the Moorish monarch for his maintenance.

The Moors of Granada were to become subjects of the Spanish sovereigns, retaining their possessions, their arms, and horses, and yielding up nothing but their artillery. They were to be protected in the exercise of their religion, and governed by their own laws, administered by cadis of their own faith, under governors appointed by the sovereigns. They were to be exempted from tribute for three years, after which term the pay was to be the same as they had been accustomed to render to their native monarchs.

Those who chose to depart for Africa, within three years, were to be provided with a passage for themselves and their effects, free of charge, from whatever port they should prefer.

For the fulfilment of these articles, four hundred hostages from the principal families were required, previous to the surrender, to be subsequently restored. The son of the King of Granada, and all other hostages in possession of the Castilian sovereigns, were to be given up at the same time.

Such were the conditions that the wazir, Abal Casim, laid before the council of Gra-

nada, as the best that could be obtained from the besieging foe.

When the members of the council found, that the awful moment had arrived, in which they were to sign and seal the prediction of their empire, and blot themselves out as a nation, all firmness deserted them, and many gave way to tears. Muza alone retained an unaltered mien. "Leave, seniors," cried he, "this idle lamentation to helpless women and children. We are men; we have hearts, not to shed tender tears, but drops of blood. I see the spirit of the people so cast down, that it is impossible to save the kingdom. Yet, there still remains an alternative for noble minds—a glorious death! Let us die defending our liberty, and avenging the woes of Granada! Our mother Earth will receive her children into her bosom, safe from the chains and oppressions of the conqueror; or, should any fail of a sepulchre to hide his remains, he will not want a sky to cover him: Allah forbid it should be said, the nobles of Granada feared to die in her defence!"

Muza ceased to speak, and a dead silence reigned in the assembly. Boabdil el Chico

looked anxiously round, and scanned every face; but he read in them all the anxiety of careworn men, in whose hearts enthusiasm was dead, and who had grown callous to every chivalrous appeal. "Allah achbar! God is great!" exclaimed he: "there is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet! It is in vain to struggle against the will of Heaven. Too surely was it written in the book of fate, that I should be unfortunate, and the kingdom expire under my rule!"

"Allah achbar! God is great!" echoed the viziers and alfaquis: "the will of God be done!" So they all accorded with the king, that these evils were preordained; that it was hopeless to contend with them; and that the terms offered by the Castilian monarchs were as favourable as could be expected. When Muza saw, that they were about to sign the treaty of surrender, he rose, in violent indignation. "Do not deceive yourselves," cried he, "nor think the Christians will be faithful to their promises, or their king as magnanimous in conquest, as he has been victorious in war. Death is the least we have to fear: it is the plundering and sacking of our city,

the profanation of our mosques, the ruin of our homes, the violation of our wives and daughters; cruel oppression, bigoted intolerance, whips and chains; the dungeon, the faggot, and the stake: such are the miseries and indignities we shall see and suffer; at least those grovelling souls will see them, who now shrink from an honourable death. For my part, by Allah, I will never witness them!" With these words he left the council chamber, and strode gloomily through the court of lions, and the outer halls of the Alhambra, without deigning to speak to the obsequious courtiers, who attended in them. He repaired to his dwelling, armed himself at all points, mounted his favourite war horse, and, issuing forth from the city by the gate of Elvira, was never seen or heard of more *.

Such is the account given by Arabian historians of the exit of Muza ben Abel Gazan: but the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida endeavours to clear up the mystery of his fate. That very evening, a party of Andalusian cavaliers, somewhat more than half a score of

* Conde, part iv.

lances, were riding along the banks of the Xenil, where it winds through the vega. They beheld in the twilight a Moorish warrior approaching, closely locked up from head to foot in proof. His visor was closed, his lance in rest, his powerful charger barbed, like himself, in steel. The Christians were lightly armed, with corslet, helm, and target; for, during the truce, they apprehended no attack. Seeing, however, the unknown warrior approach in this hostile guise, they challenged him to stand and declare himself.

The Moslem answered not; but, charging into the midst of them, transfixed one knight with his lance, and bore him out of his saddle to the earth. Wheeling round, he attacked the others with his cimeter. His blows were furious and deadly: he seemed regardless what wounds he received, so he could but slay. He was evidently fighting, not for glory, but revenge; eager to inflict death, but careless of surviving to enjoy victory. Nearly one half of the cavaliers fell beneath his sword, before he received a dangerous wound, so completely was he cased in armour of proof. At length he was desperately wounded; and his steed,

being pierced by a lance, fell to the ground. The Christians, admiring the valour of the Moor, would have spared his life; but he continued to fight upon his knees, brandishing a keen dagger of Fez. Finding at length he could no longer battle, and determined not to be taken prisoner, he threw himself, with an expiring exertion, into the Xenil; and his armour sank him to the bottom of the stream.

This unknown warrior the venerable Agapida pronounces to have been Muza ben Abel Gazan; and says, his horse was recognised by certain converted Moors of the Christian camp: the fact, however, has always remained in doubt.

CHAPTER XCVII.

Commotions in Granada.

The capitulation for the surrender of Granada was signed on the 25th of November, 1481, and produced a sudden cessation of those hostilities, which had raged for so many years. Christian and Moor might now be seen mingling courteously on the banks of the Xenil and the Darro, where to have met a few days previous would have produced a scene of sanguinary contest. Still, as the Moors might be suddenly aroused to defence, if, within the allotted term of seventy days, succours should arrive from abroad; and as they were at all times a rash, inflammable people, the wary Ferdinand maintained a vigilant watch upon the city, and permitted no supplies of any kind to enter. His garrisons in the seaports, and his cruisers in the Straits of Gibraltar, were ordered likewise to guard against any relief from the Grand Soldan of Egypt, or the princes of Barbary.

There was no need of such precautions. Those powers were either too much engrossed by their own wars, or too much daunted by the success of the Spanish arms, to interfere in a desperate cause; and the unfortunate Moors of Granada were abandoned to their fate.

The month of December had nearly passed away; the famine became extreme; and there was no hope of any favourable event within the term specified in the capitulation. Boabdil saw, that to hold out to the end of the allotted time would only be to protract the miseries of his people. With the consent of his council, he determined to surrender the city on the 6th of January. On the 30th of December, he sent his grand vizier, Jusef Aben Comixa, with the four hundred hostages, to King Ferdinand, to make known his intention; bearing him, at the same time, a present of a magnificent cimeter, and two Arabian steeds, superbly caparisoned.

The unfortunate Boabdil was doomed to meet with trouble to the end of his career. The very next day, the santon, or dervise, Hamet Aben Zarah, the same who had uttered

prophecies and excited commotions on former occasions, suddenly made his appearance. Whence he came, no one knew: it was rumoured, that he had been in the mountains of the Alpuxarras, and on the coast of Barbary, endeavouring to rouse the Moslems to the relief of Granada. He was reduced to a skeleton. His eyes glowed in their sockets like coals, and his speech was little better than frantic raving. He harangued the populace in the streets and squares; inveighed against the capitulation; denounced the king and nobles as Moslems only in name; and called upon the people to sally forth against the unbelievers, for that Allah had decreed them a signal victory.

Upwards of twenty thousand of the populace seized their arms, and paraded the streets with shouts and outcries. The shops and houses were shut up; the king himself did not dare to venture forth, but remained a kind of prisoner in the Alhambra.

The turbulent multitude continued running, and shouting, and howling about the city, during the day and a part of the night. Hunger and a wintry tempest tamed their frenzy;

and, when morning came, the enthusiast who had led them on had disappeared. Whether he had been disposed of by the emissaries of the king, or by the leading men of the city, is not known; his disappearance remaining a mystery*.

The Moorish king now issued from the Alhambra, attended by his principal nobles, and harangued the populace. He set forth the necessity of complying with the capitulation, from the famine that reigned in the city, the futility of defence, and from the hostages having already been delivered into the hands of the besiegers.

In the dejection of his spirits, the unfortunate Boabdil attributed to himself the miseries of the country. "It was my crime, in ascending the throne in rebellion against my father," said he, mournfully, "which has brought these woes upon the kingdom; but Allah has grievously visited my sins upon my head! For your sake, my people, I have now made this treaty, to protect you from the sword, your little ones from famine, your wives and daugh-

* Mariana

ters from the outrages of war, and to secure you in the enjoyment of your properties, your liberties, your laws, and your religion, under a sovereign of happier destinies than the ill-starred Boabdil!" The versatile populace were touched by the humility of their sovereign: they agreed to adhere to the capitulation; there was even a faint shout of "Long live Boabdil the unfortunate!" and they all returned to their homes in perfect tranquillity.

Boabdil immediately sent missives to King Ferdinand, apprizing him of these events, and of his fears lest further delay should produce new tumults. He proposed, therefore, to surrender the city on the following day. The Castilian sovereigns assented with great satisfaction; and preparations were made, both in city and camp, for this great event, that was to seal the fate of Granada.

It was a night of doleful lamentings within the walls of the Alhambra; for the household of Boabdil were preparing to take a last farewell of that delightful abode. All the royal treasures, and the most precious effects of the Alhambra, were hastily packed upon mules; the beautiful apartments were despoiled, with

tears and wailings, by their own inhabitants. Before the dawn of day, a mournful cavalcade moved obscurely out of a postern gate of the Alhambra, and departed through one of the most retired quarters of the city. It was composed of the family of the unfortunate Boabdil, whom he sent off thus privately, that they might not be exposed to the eyes of scoffers, or the exultation of the enemy. The mother of Boabdil, the sultana Ayxa la Horra, rode on in silence, with dejected yet dignified demeanour; but his wife Zorayma, and all the females of his household, gave way to loud lamentations, as they gave a last look to their favourite abode, now a mass of gloomy towers behind them. They were attended by the ancient domestics of the household, and by a small guard of veteran Moors, loyally attached to the fallen monarch, and who would have sold their lives dearly in defence of his family. The city was yet buried in sleep, as they passed through its silent streets. The guards at the gate shed tears as they opened it for their departure. They tarried not, but proceeded along the banks of the Xenil, on the road that

leads to the Alpuxarras, until they arrived at a hamlet, at some distance from the city, where they halted, and waited until they should be joined by King Boabdil.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

Surrender of Granada.

The sun had scarcely begun to shed his beams upon the summits of the snowy mountains, which rise above Granada, when the Christian camp was in motion. A detachment of horse and foot, led by distinguished cavaliers, and accompanied by Hernando de Talavera, bishop of Avila, proceeded to take possession of the Alhambra and the towers. It had been stipulated in the capitulation, that the detachment sent for this purpose should not enter by the streets of the city. A road had, therefore, been opened outside of the walls, leading by the Puerta de los Molinos (or the Gate of the Mills) to the summit of the Hill of Martyrs, and across the hill to a postern gate of the Alhambra.

When the detachment arrived at the summit of the hill, the Moorish king came forth from the gate, attended by a handful of cavaliers,

leaving his vizier, Jusef Aben Comixa, to deliver up the palace. "Go, senior," said he, to the commander of the detachment; "go, and take possession of those fortresses, which Allah has bestowed upon your powerful lord, in punishment of the sins of the Moors!" He said no more, but passed mournfully on, along the same road by which the Spanish cavaliers had come; descending to the vega, to meet the catholic sovereigns. The troops entered the Alhambra, the gates of which were wide open, and all its splendid courts and halls silent and deserted. In the mean time, the Christian court and army poured out of the city of Santa Fé, and advanced across the vega. The king and queen, with the prince and princess, and the dignitaries and ladies of the court, took the lead; accompanied by the different orders of monks and friars, and surrounded by the royal guards, splendidly arrayed. The procession moved slowly forward, and paused at the village of Armilla, at the distance of half a league from the city.

The sovereigns waited here with impatience, their eyes fixed on the lofty tower of the Al-

hambra, watching for the appointed signal of possession. The time, that had elapsed since the departure of the detachment, seemed to them more than necessary for the purpose; and the anxious mind of Ferdinand began to entertain doubts of some commotion in the city. At length they saw the silver cross, the great standard of this crusade, elevated on the Torre de la Vela, or great watch-tower, and sparkling in the sunbeams. This was done by Hernando de Talavera, bishop of Avila. Beside it was planted the pennon of the glorious apostle St. James; and a great shout of "Santiago! Santiago!" rose throughout the army. Lastly was reared the royal standard, by the king of arms; with the shout of "Castile! Castile! For King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella!" The words were echoed by the whole army, with acclamations that resounded across the vega. At sight of these signals of possession, the sovereigns fell upon their knees, giving thanks to God for this great triumph. The whole assembled host followed their example; and the choristers of the royal chapel broke forth into the solemn anthem of *Te Deum laudamus!*

The procession now resumed its march, with joyful alacrity, to the sound of triumphant music, until they came to a small mosque, near the banks of the Xenil, and not far from the foot of the Hill of Martyrs, which edifice remains to the present day, consecrated as the hermitage of St. Sebastian. Here the sovereigns were met by the unfortunate Boabdil, accompanied by about fifty cavaliers and domestics. As he drew near, he would have dismounted, in token of homage; but Ferdinand prevented him. He then proffered to kiss the king's hand, but this sign of vassalage was likewise declined: whereupon, not to be outdone in magnanimity, he leaned forward, and saluted the right arm of Ferdinand. Queen Isabella, also, refused to receive this ceremonial of homage; and, to console him under his adversity, delivered to him his son, who had remained as hostage ever since Boabdil's liberation from captivity. The Moorish monarch pressed his child to his bosom with tender emotion, and they seemed mutually endeared to each other by their misfortunes*.

* Zurita, Anales de Aragon.

He then delivered the keys of the city to King Ferdinand, with an air of mingled melancholy and resignation. "These keys," said he, "are the last relics of the Arabian empire in Spain. Thine, O king, are our trophies, our kingdom, and our person! Such is the will of God! Receive them with the clemency thou hast promised, and which we look for at thy hands *!"

King Ferdinand restrained his exultation into an air of serene magnanimity. "Doubt not our promises," replied he; "or, that thou shalt regain from our friendship the prosperity of which the fortune of war has deprived thee."

On receiving the keys, King Ferdinand handed them to the queen. She, in her turn, presented them to her son, Prince Juan, who delivered them to the Count de Tendilla; that brave and loyal cavalier being appointed alcayde of the city, and captain general of the kingdom of Granada.

Having surrendered the last symbol of power, the unfortunate Boabdil continued on

* Abarca, Anales de Aragon, rey xxx. c. 3.

towards the Alpuxarras, that he might not behold the entrance of the Christians into his capital. His devoted band of cavaliers followed him in gloomy silence; but heavy sighs burst from their bosoms, as shouts of joy and strains of triumphant music were borne on the breeze from the victorious army.

Having rejoined his family, Boabdil set forward with a heavy heart for his allotted residence, in the valley of Porchena. At two leagues distance, the cavalcade, winding into the skirts of the Alpuxarras, ascended an eminence commanding the last view of Granada. As they arrived at this spot, the Moors paused involuntarily, to take a farewell gaze at their beloved city, which a few steps more would shut from their sight for ever. Never had it appeared so lovely in their eyes. The sunshine, so bright in that transparent climate, lighted up each tower and minaret, and rested gloriously upon the crowning battlements of the Alhambra; while the vega spread its enamelled bosom of verdure below, glistening with the silver windings of the Xenil. The Moorish cavaliers gazed with a silent agony of tenderness and grief, upon that delicious

abode, the scene of their loves and pleasures. While they yet looked, a light cloud of smoke burst forth from the citadel; and, presently, a peal of artillery, faintly heard, told, that the city was taken possession of, and the throne of the Moslem kings was lost for ever. The heart of Boabdil, softened by misfortunes and overcharged with grief, could no longer contain itself. "Allah achbar! God is great!" said he; but the words of resignation died upon his lips, and he burst into a flood of tears.

His mother, the intrepid sultana Ayxa la Horra, was indignant at his weakness. "You do well," said she, "to weep like a woman, for what you failed to defend like a man!"

The vizier Aben Comixa endeavoured to console his royal master. "Consider, sire," said he, "that the most signal misfortunes often render men as renowned as the most prosperous achievements, provided they sustain them with magnanimity." The unhappy monarch, however, was not to be consoled. His tears continued to flow. "Allah achbar!"

exclaimed he, "when did misfortunes ever equal mine!"

From this circumstance the hill, which is not far from Padul, took the name of Fez Allah Achbar; but the point of view commanding the last prospect of Granada is known among Spaniards by the name of *el ultimo suspiro del Moro*, or, "the last sigh of the Moor."

CHAPTER XCIX.

How the Castilian sovereigns took possession of Granada.

When the Castilian sovereigns had received the keys of Granada, from the hands of Boabdil el Chico, the royal army resumed its triumphant march. As it approached the gates of the city, in all the pomp of courtly and chivalrous array, a procession of a different kind came forth to meet it. This was composed of more than five hundred Christian captives, many of whom had languished for years in Moorish dungeons. Pale and emaciated, they came clanking their chains in triumph, and shedding tears of joy. They were received with tenderness by the sovereigns. The king hailed them as good Spaniards; as men loyal and brave; as martyrs to the holy cause. The queen distributed liberal relief among them with her own hands,

and they passed on before the squadrons of the army, singing hymns of jubilee*.

The sovereigns did not enter the city, on this day of its surrender; but waited until it should be fully occupied by their troops, and public tranquillity ensured. The Marquis de Villena, and the Count de Tendilla, with three thousand cavalry, and as many infantry, marched in, and took possession, accompanied by the proselyte prince, Cidi Yahye, now known by the Christian appellation of Don Pedro de Granada, who was appointed chief alguazil of the city, and had charge of the Moorish inhabitants; and by his son, the late Prince Alnayer, now Don Alonzo de Granada, who was appointed admiral of the fleets. In a little while every battlement glistened with Christian helms and lances, the standard of the faith and of the realm floated from every tower, and the thundering salvos of the ordnance told, that the subjugation of the city was complete.

The grandees and cavaliers now knelt, and kissed the hands of the king and queen, and

* Abarca, ubi supra. Zurita, &c.

the Prince Juan, and congratulated them on the acquisition of so great a kingdom; after which the royal procession returned in state to Santa Fé.

It was on the 6th of January, the day of kings, and festival of the Epiphany, that the sovereigns made their triumphal entry. "The king and queen," says the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "looked on this occasion as more than mortal. The venerable ecclesiastics, to whose advice and zeal this glorious conquest ought in a great measure to be attributed, moved along, with hearts swelling with holy exultation, but with chastened and downcast looks of edifying humility; while the hardy warriors, in tossing plumes and shining steel, seemed elevated with a stern joy, at finding themselves in possession of this object of so many toils and perils. As the streets resounded with the tramp of steed, and swelling peals of music, the Moors buried themselves in the deepest recesses of their dwellings. There they bewailed in secret the fallen glory of their race; but suppressed their groans, lest they should be heard by their enemies, and increase their triumph."

The royal procession advanced to the principal mosque, which had been consecrated as a cathedral. Here the sovereigns offered up prayers and thanksgivings, and the choir of the royal chapel chanted a triumphant anthem, in which they were joined by all the courtiers and cavaliers. "Nothing," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "could exceed the thankfulness to God of the pious King Ferdinand, for having enabled him to eradicate from Spain the empire and name of that accursed heathen race, and for the elevation of the cross in that city, wherein the impious doctrines of Mahomet had so long been cherished. In the fervour of his spirit, he supplicated from Heaven a continuance of its grace, and that this glorious triumph might be perpetuated*." The prayer of the pious monarch was responded by the people, and even his enemies were for once convinced of his sincerity.

When the religious ceremonies were concluded, the court ascended to the stately palace of the Alhambra, and entered by the

* The words of Fray Antonio Agapida are little more than an echo of those of the worthy jesuit, Father Mariana, (l. xxv. c. 18.)

great gate of justice. The halls, lately occupied by turbaned infidels, now rustled with stately dames and Christian courtiers, who wandered with eager curiosity over this far-famed palace, admiring its verdant courts and gushing fountains, its halls decorated with elegant arabesques, and storied with inscriptions, and the splendour of its gilded and brilliantly painted ceilings.

It had been a last request of the unfortunate Boabdil, and one which showed how deeply he felt the transition of his fate, that no person might be permitted to enter or depart by the gate of the Alhambra through which he had sallied forth to surrender his capital. His request was granted: the portal was closed up, and remains so to the present day; a mute memorial of that event*.

Note.—The existence of this gateway, and the story connected with it, are perhaps known to few, but were identified in the researches made to verify this history. The gateway is at the bottom of a great tower, at some distance from the main body of the Alhambra. The

* Garibay, Compend. Hist. l. xl. c. 42.

tower has been rent and ruined by gunpowder, at the time when the fortress was evacuated by the French. Great masses lie around, half covered by vines and fig trees. A poor man, by the name of Matteo Ximenes, who lives in one of the hovels among the ruins of the Alhambra, where his family has lived for many generations, pointed out the gateway, still closed up with stones. He remembered to have heard his father and grandfather say, that it had always been stopped up, and that out of it King Boabdil had gone, when he surrendered Granada. The route of the unfortunate king may be traced from thence across the garden of the convent of Los Martyres, and down a ravine beyond, through a street of gipsy caves and hovels, by the gate of Los Molinos, and so on to the Hermitage of St. Sebastian. None but an antiquarian, however, will be able to trace it, unless aided by the humble historian of the place, Matteo Ximenes.

The Spanish sovereigns fixed their throne in the presence chamber of the palace, so long the seat of Moorish royalty. Hither the principal inhabitants of Granada repaired, to

pay them homage, and kiss their hands, in token of vassalage; and their example was followed by deputies from all the towns and fortresses of the Alpuxarras, which had not hitherto submitted.

Thus terminated the war of Granada, after ten years of incessant fighting; "equalling," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "the far-famed siege of Troy in duration, and ending, like that, in the capture of the city." Thus ended, also, the dominion of the Moors in Spain, after having endured seven hundred and seventy-eight years from the memorable defeat of Roderick, the last of the Goths, on the banks of the Guadalete. The authentic Agapida is uncommonly particular in fixing the epoch of this event. "This great triumph of our holy catholic faith," according to his computation, "took place in the beginning of January, in the year of our Lord 1492; being 3655 years from the population of Spain by the patriarch Tubal; 3797 from the general deluge; 5453 from the creation of the world, according to Hebrew calculation; and in the month Rabic, in the 897th year of the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet: whom may God confound!" saith the pious Agapida.

APPENDIX.

FATE OF BOABDIL EL CHICO.

The Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada is finished: but the reader may be desirous of knowing the subsequent fortunes of some of the principal personages. The unfortunate Boabdil retired to the valley of Porchena, where a small but fertile territory had been allotted him; comprising several towns, with all their rights and revenues. Great estates had likewise been bestowed on his vizier, Josef Aben Comixa, and his valiant relation and friend, Josef Venegas, both of whom resided near him. Were it in the heart of man, in the enjoyment of present competence, to forget past splendour, Boabdil might at length have been happy. Dwelling in the bosom of a delightful valley, surrounded by obedient vassals, devoted friends, and a loving family, he might have looked back upon his past career as upon a troubled and terrific dream; and might have thanked his stars, that he had at length awaked to sweet and tranquil se-

curity. But the dethroned prince could never forget, that he had once been a monarch; and the remembrance of the regal splendours of Granada made all present comforts contemptible in his eyes. No exertions were spared by Ferdinand and Isabella, to induce him to embrace the catholic religion: but he remained true to the faith of his fathers; and it added not a little to his humiliation, to live, a vassal under Christian sovereigns.

It is probable, that his residence in the kingdom was equally irksome to the politic Ferdinand; who could not feel perfectly secure in his newly conquered territories, while there was one within their bounds, who might revive pretensions to the throne. A private bargain was therefore made, in the year 1496, between Ferdinand and Josef Aben Comixa; in which the latter, as vizier of Boabdil, undertook to dispose of his master's scanty territory for eighty thousand ducats of gold. This, it is affirmed, was done without the consent or knowledge of Boabdil; but the vizier probably thought he was acting for the best. The shrewd Ferdinand does not appear to have made any question about the right of the vizier to make the sale; but paid the money

with secret exultation. Josef Aben Comixa loaded the treasure upon mules, and departed joyfully for the Alpuxarras. He spread the money in triumph before Boabdil. "Senior," said he, "I have observed, that, as long as you live here, you are exposed to constant peril. The Moors are rash and irritable. They may make some sudden insurrection, elevate your standard as a pretext, and thus overwhelm you and your friends with utter ruin. I have observed, also, that you pine away with grief; being continually reminded in this country, that you were once its sovereign, but never more must hope to reign. I have put an end to these evils. Your territory is sold. Behold the price of it. With this gold, you may buy far greater possessions in Africa, where you may live in honour and security."

When Boabdil heard these words, he burst into a sudden transport of rage; and, drawing his cimeter, would have sacrificed the officious Josef on the spot, had not the attendants interfered, and hurried the vizier from his presence.

Boabdil was not of a vindictive spirit, and his anger soon passed away. He saw, that the evil was done; and he knew the spirit of the

politic Ferdinand too well, to hope that he would retract the bargain. Gathering together the money, therefore, and all his jewels and precious effects, he departed with his family and household for a port, where a vessel had been carefully provided by the Castilian king to transport them to Africa.

A crowd of his former subjects witnessed his embarkation. As the sails were unfurled, and swelled to the breeze, and the vessel parted from the land, the spectators would fain have given him a parting cheering; but the humbled state of their once proud sovereign forced itself upon their minds, and the ominous surname of his youth rose involuntarily to their tongues. "Farewell, Boabdil! Allah preserve thee, El Zogoybi!" burst spontaneously from their lips. The unlucky appellation sank into the heart of the expatriated monarch; and tears dimmed his eyes, as the snowy summits of the mountains of Granada gradually faded from his view.

He was received with welcome at the court of his relation, Muley Ahmed, King of Fez; and resided for many years in his territories. How he passed his life, whether repining or resigned, history does not mention.

The last we find recorded of him is in the year 1536, thirty-four years after the surrender of Granada; when he followed the King of Fez to the field, to quell the rebellion of two brothers, named Xerifes. The armies came in sight of each other on the banks of the Guadiswed, at the ford of Bacuba. The river was deep; the banks were high and broken. For three days, the armies remained firing at each other across the stream, neither party venturing to attempt the dangerous ford.

At length the King of Fez divided his army into three battalions; the first led on by his son and by Boabdil el Chico. They boldly dashed across the ford, scrambled up the opposite bank, and attempted to keep the enemy employed, until the other battalions should have time to cross. The rebel army, however, attacked them with such fury, that the son of the King of Fez and several of the bravest alcaydes were slain upon the spot, and multitudes driven back into the river, which was already crowded with passing troops. A dreadful confusion took place; the horse trampled upon the foot; the enemy pressed on them with fearful slaughter; those who escaped the

sword perished by the stream. The river was choked by the dead bodies of men and horses, and by the scattered baggage of the army. In this scene of horrible carnage fell Boabdil, truly called El Zogoybi, or the unlucky: "an instance," says the ancient chronicler, "of the scornful caprice of fortune; dying in defence of the kingdom of another, after wanting spirit to die in defence of his own*."

Note.—A portrait of Boabdil el Chico is to be seen in the picture gallery of the Generalife. He is represented with a mild, handsome face, a fair complexion, and yellow hair. His dress is of yellow brocade, relieved with black velvet, and he has a black velvet cap, surmounted with a crown. In the armoury of Madrid are two suits of armour, said to have belonged to him, one of solid steel, with very little ornament; the morion closed. From the proportions of these suits of armour, he must have been of full stature and vigorous form.

* Marmol. Descrip. de Africa, p. i. l. ii. c. 40. Idem, Hist. Reb. de los Moros, l. i. c. 21.

DEATH OF THE MARQUIS OF CADIZ.

THE renowned Roderigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis Duke of Cadiz, was unquestionably the most distinguished among the cavaliers of Spain, for his zeal, enterprise, and heroism, in the great crusade of Granada. He began the war by the capture of Alhama; he was engaged in almost every inroad and siege of importance during its continuance; and he was present at the surrender of the capital, which was the closing scene of the conquest. The renown he thus acquired was sealed by his death, in the forty-eighth year of his age, which happened almost immediately at the close of his triumphs, and before a leaf of his laurels had time to wither. He died at his palace, in the city of Seville, on the twenty-seventh day of August, 1492, but a few months after the surrender of Granada, and of an illness caused by the exposure and fatigues he had undergone in this memorable war. That honest chronicler, Andres Bernaldes, the curate of Los Palacios, who was

a contemporary of the marquis, draws his portrait from actual knowledge and observation. "He was universally cited," says he, "as the most perfect model of chivalrous virtue of the age. He was temperate, chaste, and rigidly devout; a benignant commander, a valiant defender of his vassals, a great lover of justice, and an enemy to all flatterers, liars, robbers, traitors, and poltroons. His ambition was of a lofty kind; he sought to distinguish himself and his family by heroic and resounding deeds, and to increase the patrimony of his ancestors by the acquisition of castles, domains, vassals, and other princely possessions. His recreations were all of a warlike nature: he delighted in geometry, as applied to fortifications, and spent much time and treasure in erecting and repairing fortresses. He relished music, but of a military kind; the sound of clarions and sackbuts, of drums and trumpets. Like a true cavalier, he was a protector of the sex on all occasions, and an injured woman never applied to him in vain for redress. His prowess was so well known, and his courtesy to the fair, that the ladies of the court, when they accompanied the queen to the wars, rejoiced to find themselves under his protection; for, wherever

his banner was displayed, the Moors dreaded to adventure. He was a faithful and devoted friend, but a formidable enemy; for he was slow to forgive, and his vengeance was persevering and terrible.

The death of this good cavalier spread grief and lamentation throughout all ranks; for he was universally honoured and beloved. His relations, dependents, and companions in arms put on mourning for his loss; and so numerous were they, that half of Seville was clad in black. None, however, deplored his death more deeply and sincerely than his friend and chosen companion, Don Alonzo de Aguilar.

The funeral ceremonies were of the most solemn and sumptuous kind. The body of the marquis was arrayed in a costly shirt, a doublet of brocade, a sayo, or long robe of black velvet, a marlota, or Moorish tunic of brocade, that reached to the feet, and scarlet stockings. His sword, superbly gilt, was girded to his side, as he used to wear it when in the field. Thus magnificently attired, the body was enclosed in a coffin, which was covered with black velvet, and decorated with a cross of white damask. It was then placed

on a sumptuous bier, in the centre of the great hall of the palace.

Here the duchess made great lamentation over the body of her lord, in which she was joined by her train of damsels and attendants, as well as by the pages and esquires, and innumerable vassals of the marquis.

In the close of the evening, just before the "Ave Maria," the funeral train issued from the palace. Ten banners were borne around the bier, the particular trophies of the marquis, won from the Moors by his valour in individual enterprises, before King Ferdinand had commenced the war of Granada. The procession was swelled by an immense train of bishops, priests, and friars of different orders, together with the civil and military authorities, and all the chivalry of Seville; headed by the Count of Cifuentes, at that time intendente, or commander of the city. It moved slowly and solemnly through the streets, stopping occasionally, and chanting litanies and responses. Two hundred and forty waxen tapers shed a light like the day about the bier. The balconies and windows were crowded with ladies, who shed tears as

the funeral train passed by; while the women of the lower classes were loud in their lamentations, as if bewailing the loss of a father or a brother. On approaching the convent of St. Augustine, the monks came forth with the cross and tapers, and eight censers, and conducted the body into the church, where it lay in state, until all the vigils were performed by the different orders, after which it was deposited in the family tomb of the Ponces in the same church, and the ten banners were suspended over the sepulchre*.

His tomb, with the banners mouldering above it, remained for ages, an object of veneration with all who had read or heard of his virtues and achievements. In the year 1810, however, the chapel was sacked by the French, its altars overturned, and the sepulchres of the family of the Ponces shattered to pieces. The present Duchess of Benavente, the worthy descendant of this illustrious and heroic line, has since piously collected the ashes of her ancestors, restored the altar, and repaired the chapel. The sepulchres, however, were utterly

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 104.

destroyed, and an inscription of gold letters, on the wall of the chapel, to the right of the altar, is now all that denotes the place of sepulture of the brave Roderigo Ponce de Leon.

THE LEGEND OF THE DEATH OF DON ALONZO DE AGUILAR.

To such as feel an interest in the fortunes of the valiant Don Alonzo de Aguilar, the chosen friend and companion in arms of Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, and one of the most distinguished heroes of the war of Granada, a few particulars of his remarkable fate will not be unacceptable. They are found among the manuscripts of the worthy Padre Fray Antonio Agapida, and appear to have been appended to his chronicle.

For several years after the conquest of Granada, the country remained feverish and unquiet. The zealous efforts of the catholic clergy to effect the conversion of the infidels, and the pious coercion used for that purpose by government, exasperated the stubborn Moors of the mountains. Several zealous missionaries were maltreated, and, in the town of Dayrin, two of them were seized, and exhorted, with many menaces, to embrace the

Moslem faith. On their resolutely refusing, they were killed with staffs and stones, by the Moorish women and children, and their bodies burnt to ashes *.

Upon this event, a body of Christian cavaliers assembled in Andalusia, to the number of eight hundred; and, without waiting for orders from the king, revenged the death of these martyrs, by plundering and laying waste the Moorish towns and villages. The Moors fled to the mountains, and their cause was espoused by many of their nation, who inhabited those rugged regions. The storm of rebellion began to gather, and mutter its thunders in the Alpuxarras. They were echoed from the Serrania of Ronda, ever ready for rebellion; but the strongest hold of the insurgents was in the Sierra Vermeja, or chain of red mountains, lying near the sea, the savage rocks and precipices of which may be seen from Gibraltar.

When King Ferdinand heard of these tumults, he issued a proclamation, ordering all the Moors of the insurgent regions to leave them within ten days, and repair to Castile; giving secret instructions, however, that those,

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 165.

who should voluntarily embrace the Christian faith, might be permitted to remain. At the same time he ordered Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and the Counts of Ureña and Cifuentes, to march against the rebels.

Don Alonzo de Aguilar was at Cordova when he received the commands of the king. "What force is allotted us for this expedition?" said he. On being told, he perceived, that the number of troops was far from adequate. "When a man is dead," said he, "we send four men into his house, to bring forth the body. We are now sent to chastise those Moors, who are alive, vigorous, in open rebellion, and ensconced in their castles; and they do not give us man to man." These words of the brave Alonzo de Aguilar were afterwards frequently repeated; but, though he saw the desperate nature of the enterprise, he did not hesitate to undertake it.

Don Alonzo was, at that time, in the fifty-first year of his age. He was a veteran warrior, in whom the fire of youth was yet unquenched, though tempered by experience. The greater part of his life had been passed in the camp and in the field, until danger was as his natural element. His muscular frame

had acquired the firmness of iron, without the rigidity of age. His armour and weapons seemed to have become a part of his nature; and he sat like a man of steel on his powerful war horse.

He took with him, on this expedition, his son, Don Pedro de Cordova; a youth of bold and generous spirit, in the freshness of his days, and armed and arrayed with all the bravery of a young Spanish cavalier. When the populace of Cordova beheld the veteran father, the warrior of a thousand battles, leading forth his youthful son to the field, they bethought themselves of the family appellation. "Behold," cried they, "the eagle teaching his young to fly! Long live the valiant line of Aguilar * !"

The prowess of Don Alonzo and of his companions in arms was renowned throughout the Moorish towns. At their approach, therefore, numbers of the Moors submitted, and hastened to Ronda to embrace Christianity. Among the mountaineers, however, there were many of the Gandules, a fierce tribe from Africa, too proud of spirit to bend

* Aguilar, the Spanish for eagle.

their necks to the yoke. At their head was a Moor, named El Feri of Ben Estepar, renowned for strength and courage. At his instigations, his followers gathered together their families and most precious effects; placed them on mules, and, driving before them their flocks and herds, abandoned their valleys, and retired up the craggy passes of the Sierra Vermeja. On the summit was a fertile plain, surrounded by rocks and precipices, which formed a natural fortress. Here El Feri placed all the women and children, and all the property. By his orders, his followers piled great stones on the rocks and cliffs, which commanded the defiles and the steep side of the mountain, and prepared to defend every pass that led to his place of refuge.

The Christian commanders arrived, and pitched their camp before the town of Monardo; a strong place, curiously fortified, and situated at the foot of the highest part of the Sierra Vermeja. Here they remained for several days, unable to compel a surrender. They were separated from the skirt of the mountain by a deep barranca or ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a small stream. The Moors, commanded by El Feri, drew down

from their mountain height, and remained on the opposite side of the brook, to defend a pass which led up to their strong hold.

One afternoon, a number of Christian soldiers, in mere bravado, seized a banner, crossed the brook, and, scrambling up the opposite bank, attacked the Moors. They were followed by numbers of their companions; some in aid, some in emulation, but most in hope of booty. A sharp action ensued on the mountain side. The Moors were greatly superior in number, and had the vantage ground. When the Counts of Ureña and Cifuentes beheld this skirmish, they asked Don Alonzo de Aguilar his opinion. "My opinion," said he, "was given at Cordova, and remains the same. This is a desperate enterprise. However, the Moors are at hand; and if they suspect weakness in us, it will increase their courage and our peril. Forward then to the attack, and I trust in God we shall gain a victory!" So saying, he led his troops into the battle *.

On the skirts of the mountains were several level places, like terraces. Here the Christians

* Bleda, l. v. c. 26.

pressed valiantly upon the Moors, and had the advantage; but the latter retreated to the steep and craggy heights, from whence they hurled darts and rocks upon their assailants. They defended their passes and defiles with ferocious valour; but were driven from height to height, until they reached the plain on the summit of the mountain, where their wives and children were sheltered. Here they would have made a stand; but Alonzo de Aguilar, with his son Don Pedro, charged upon them at the head of three hundred men, and put them to flight, with dreadful carnage. While they were pursuing the flying enemy, the rest of the army, thinking the victory achieved, dispersed themselves over the little plain in search of plunder. They pursued the shrieking females, tearing off their necklaces, bracelets, and anklets of gold; and they found so much treasure of various kinds collected in this spot, that they threw by their armour and weapons, to load themselves with booty.

Evening was closing: the Christians, intent upon spoil, had ceased to pursue the Moors, and the latter were arrested in their flight by the cries of their wives and children.

Their fierce leader, El Feri, threw himself before them. "Friends, soldiers," cried he, "whither do you fly? whither can you seek refuge, where the enemy cannot follow you? Your wives, your children, are behind you; turn and defend them: you have no chance for safety but from the weapons in your hands!"

The Moors turned at his words. They beheld the Christians scattered about the plain, many of them without armour, and all encumbered with spoil. "Now is the time," shouted El Feri; "charge upon them while laden with your plunder! I will open a path for you!" He rushed to the attack, followed by his Moors, with shouts and cries, that echoed through the mountains. The scattered Christians were seized with a panic, and, throwing down their booty, began to fly in all directions. Don Alonzo de Aguilar advanced his banner, and endeavoured to rally them. Finding his horse of no avail in these rocky heights, he dismounted, and caused his men to do the same. He had a small band of tried followers, with which he opposed a bold front to the Moors, calling on the scattered troops to rally in the rear.

Night had completely closed. It prevented the Moors from seeing the smallness of the force with which they were contending; and Don Alonzo and his cavaliers dealt their blows so vigorously, that, aided by the darkness, they seemed multiplied to ten times their number. Unfortunately, a small cask of gunpowder blew up near to the scene of action. It shed a momentary but brilliant light over all the plain, and on every rock and cliff. The Moors beheld with surprise, that they were opposed by a mere handful of men, and that the greater part of the Christians were flying from the field. They put up loud shouts of triumph. While some continued the conflict with redoubled ardour, others pursued the fugitives, hurling after them stones and darts, and discharging showers of arrows. Many of the Christians, in their terror, and their ignorance of the mountains, rushed headlong from the brinks of precipices, and were dashed in pieces.

Don Alonzo de Aguilar still maintained his ground; but while a party of the Moors assailed him in front, others galled him with all kinds of missiles from the impending cliffs. Some of the cavaliers, seeing the hopeless

nature of the conflict, proposed, that they should abandon the height, and retreat down the mountain. "No," said Don Alonzo, proudly; "never did the banner of the house of Aguilar retreat one foot in the field of battle." He had scarcely uttered these words, when his son Don Pedro was stretched at his feet. A stone hurled from a cliff had struck out two of his teeth, and a lance passed quivering through his thigh. The youth attempted to rise, and, with one knee on the ground, to fight by the side of his father. Don Alonzo, finding him wounded, urged him to quit the field. "Fly, my son," said he. "Let us not put every thing at venture upon one hazard: conduct thyself as a good Christian, and live to comfort and honour thy mother."

Don Pedro still refused to quit him; whereupon Don Alonzo ordered several of his followers to bear him off by force. His friend, Don Francisco Alvarez, of Cordova, taking him in his arms, conveyed him to the quarters of the Count of Ureña, who had halted on the heights, at some distance from the scene of battle, for the purpose of rallying and succouring the fugitives. Almost at the

same moment, the count beheld his own son, Don Pedro Giron, brought in grievously wounded.

In the mean time, Don Alonzo, with two hundred cavaliers, maintained the unequal contest. Surrounded by foes, they fell, one after another, like so many noble stags encircled by the hunters. Don Alonzo was the last survivor. He was without horse, and almost without armour; his corslet unlaced, and his bosom gashed with wounds. Still he kept a brave front towards the enemy, and, retiring between two rocks, defended himself with such valour, that the slain lay in a heap before him.

He was assailed in this retreat by a Moor of surpassing strength and fierceness. The contest was for some time doubtful; but Don Alonzo received a wound in the head, and another in the breast, that made him stagger. Closing and grappling with his foe, they had a desperate struggle, until the Christian cavalier, exhausted by his wounds, fell upon his back. He still retained his grasp upon his enemy. "Think not," cried he, "thou hast an easy prize: know, that I am Don Alonzo, he of Aguilar!" "If thou art Don Alonzo,"

replied the Moor, "know, that I am El Feri, of Ben Estepar!" They continued their deadly struggle, and both drew their daggers: but Don Alonzo was exhausted by seven ghastly wounds. While he was yet struggling, his heroic soul departed from his body, and he expired in the grasp of the Moor.

Thus fell Alonzo de Aguilar, the mirror of Andalusian chivalry; one of the most powerful grandees of Spain, for person, blood, estate, and office. For forty years he had waged successful wars upon the Moors: in childhood, by his household and retainers; in manhood, by the prowess of his arm, and the wisdom and valour of his spirit. His pennon had always been foremost in danger; he had been general of armies, viceroy of Andalusia, and the author of glorious enterprises, in which kings were vanquished, and mighty alcaydes and warriors laid low. He had slain many Moslem chiefs with his own arm, and, among others, the renowned Ali Atar, of Loxa, fighting foot to foot, on the banks of the Xenil. His judgment, discretion, magnanimity, and justice, vied with his prowess. He was the fifth lord of his warlike house, that fell in battle with the Moors. "His soul,"

observes Padre Abarca, "it is believed, ascended to heaven, to receive the reward of so Christian a captain: for that very day he had armed himself with the sacraments of confession and communion *."

The Moors, elated with their success, pursued the fugitive Christians down the defiles and sides of the mountains. It was with the utmost difficulty that the Count de Ureña could bring off a remnant of his forces from that disastrous height. Fortunately, on the lower slope of the mountain they found the rear guard of the army, led by the Count de Cifuentes, who had crossed the brook and the ravine to come to their assistance. As the fugitives came flying in headlong terror down the mountain, it was with difficulty the count kept his own troops from giving way in panic, and retreating in confusion across the brook. He succeeded, however, in maintaining order, in rallying the fugitives, and checking the fury of the Moors. Then, taking his station on a rocky eminence, he maintained his post until morning, sometimes sustaining violent attacks, at other times rushing forth, and making

* Abarca, Anales de Aragon, rey xxx. cap. 2.

assaults upon the enemy. When morning dawned, the Moors ceased to combat, and drew up to the summit of the mountain.

It was then that the Christians had time to breathe, and to ascertain the dreadful loss they had sustained. Among the many valiant cavaliers, who had fallen, was Don Francisco Ramirez of Madrid, who had been captain general of artillery throughout the war of Granada, and contributed greatly, by his valour and ingenuity, to that renowned conquest. But all other griefs and cares were forgotten in anxiety for the fate of Don Alonzo de Aguilar. His son, Don Pedro de Cordova, had been brought off with great difficulty from the battle; and afterwards lived to be Marquis of Priego. But of Don Alonzo nothing was known, except that he was left with a handful of cavaliers, fighting valiantly against an overwhelming force. As the rising sun lighted up the red cliffs of the mountains, the soldiers watched with anxious eyes, if perchance his pennon might be descried, fluttering from any precipice or defile: but nothing of the kind was to be seen. The trumpet call was repeatedly sounded: but empty echoes alone replied. A silence reigned about the mountain

summit, which showed, that the deadly strife was over. Now and then a wounded warrior came, dragging his feeble steps from among the cliffs and rocks; but, on being questioned, he shook his head mournfully, and could tell nothing of the fate of his commander.

The tidings of this disastrous defeat, and of the perilous situation of the survivors, reached King Ferdinand at Granada. He immediately marched, at the head of all the chivalry of his court, to the mountains of Ronda. His presence, with a powerful force, soon put an end to the rebellion. A part of the Moors were suffered to ransom themselves, and to embark for Africa; others were made to embrace Christianity; and those of the town where the Christian missionaries had been massacred were sold as slaves. From the conquered Moors, the mournful but heroic end of Don Alonzo de Aguilar was ascertained. On the morning after the battle, when the Moors came to strip and bury the dead, the body of Don Alonzo was found among those of more than two hundred of his followers, many of them alcaydes and cavaliers of distinction. Though the person of Don Alonzo was well known to the Moors, being so distinguished

both in peace and war, yet it was so covered and disfigured with wounds, that it could with difficulty be recognised. They preserved it with care, and, on making their submission, delivered it up to King Ferdinand. It was conveyed, with great state, to Cordova, amidst the tears and lamentations of all Andalusia. When the funeral train entered Cordova, and the inhabitants saw the coffin, containing the remains of their favourite hero, and the war horse, led in mournful trappings, on which they had so lately seen him sally forth from their gates, there was a general burst of grief throughout the city. The body was interred with great pomp and solemnity in the church of St. Hypolito. Many years afterwards, his grand daughter, Doña Catalina of Aguilar and Cordova, Marchioness of Priego, caused his tomb to be altered. On examining the body, the head of a lance was found among the bones, received, without doubt, among the wounds of his last mortal combat. The name of this accomplished and Christian cavalier has ever remained a popular theme of the chronicler and poet; and is endeared t[illegible]he public memory by many of the [illegible]ds and songs of his country. For

a long time the people of Cordova were indignant at the brave Count de Ureña, who, they thought, had abandoned Don Alonzo in his extremity; but the Castilian monarch acquitted him of all charge of the kind, and continued him in honour and office. It was proved, that neither he nor his people could succour Don Alonzo, or even know of his peril, from the darkness of the night. There is a mournful little Spanish ballad, or romance, which breathes the public grief on this occasion, and the populace, on the return of the Count de Ureña to Cordova, assailed him with one of its plaintive and reproachful verses :

"Decid Conde de Ureña,
Don Alonzo donde queda* ?"

Count Ureña! Count Ureña!
Tell us, where is Don Alonzo?

* Bleda, l. v. c. 26.

THE END.